



Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond
June 19 – 25, 2014

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Aboriginal Arts & Culture

Aboriginal artist wins prestigious award

Thursday, June 18, 2015 4:06:22 EDT PM



Daniel David Moses has been named this year's recipient of the Ontario Arts Council Aboriginal Arts Award.

For over three decades, Daniel David Moses has worked in the arts.

Now, for his prowess as a playwright, poet and essayist, he's been named this year's recipient of the Ontario Arts Council Aboriginal Arts Award.

Moses hails from the Six Nations of the Grand River and joined Queen's Department of Drama as a Queen's National Scholar in 2013. He's currently an associate professor.

"Daniel is very deserving of this price," the jury said. "He is one of the key figures of Aboriginal theatre, both artistically and academically [...] He is committed to telling the stories that created this country and is an advocate for Aboriginal culture."

The award was created in 2012 by the Ontario Arts Council to recognize the distinctive contributions of Aboriginal artists in Ontario.

The winner receives \$10,000, and is then asked to select an emerging Aboriginal artist to receive an award of \$2,500. Moses chose Falen John, an actor, playwright and dramaturge, as this year's emerging Aboriginal artist. The emerging artist award is to honour the next of generation of artists.

Local National Aboriginal Day event Sunday

National Aboriginal Day isn't only for Aboriginal Peoples.

People from all walks of life are invited to celebrate Indigenous people across Canada this Sunday, June 21 at 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at City Hall in Market Square.

This year's festivities will include Métis fiddlers, a Hoop Dancer, Fancy Dancers and Soaring Eagle Big Drum group. Caleb Gazley, an Indigenous comedian will also be performing flame-swallowing, balloon-making and juggling. Traditional food will be served and a children's craft area will be offered.

Queen's elder-in-residence, Betty Carr-Braint, a member of the Mohawk nation, will be speaking about violence against Indigenous women.

This will be Kingston's fourth year celebrating National Aboriginal Day (NAD). Canada's first NAD took place in 1996. Over the past 19 years, more and more cities, including Kingston, have come to recognize and commemorate the day.

The NAD Committee has asked that those attending bring a non-perishable food item for donation.

Direct Link: <http://www.thewhig.com/2015/06/18/aboriginal-artist-wins-prestigious-award>

National Aboriginal Day a learning experience

By Jennifer Jacoby-Smith, The StarPhoenix June 19, 2015

To celebrate National Aboriginal Day each year the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre (SICC) hosts around 450 students for a jam-packed day of fun and learning.

Groups of students from Saskatoon and surrounding First Nations rotate through various activities starting at 10 a.m. Activities include pow wow dancing, hand drum making, moccasin making, traditional games, birch bark biting, tipi raising, face painting and more. Students will be encouraged to participate in some of the activities and demonstrations.

"It's really geared to having students be engaged in something rather than us talking at them. It gives us a chance to share a bit of our culture with young people and the general public. We take pride in doing that," explains SICC president Dorothy Myo.

While it's a chance to have fun and experience something new, there will also be a serious message for kids. Part of the focus of the National Aboriginal Day programming is treaties. "And we encourage people to think about treaties and how we are all

treaty people. That's one of the things that we really stress when students come here. It's not just a crafting kind of day, but (it's) to be exposed to a really significant part of their history as well."

Experiencing the traditions of a different culture first hand can be far more impactful than learning about them in a textbook. As well, it's more than just acquiring new information, it's about creating a connection between people and a connection to the history of the province.

"Students need to learn about First Nations in a way that maybe they haven't in the past," says Myo. "(They need to) to look at things from a different perspective and just to be exposed to these different activities that are part of our lives and to share a little bit of our heritage and our past."

National Aboriginal Day at SICC also provides students with a chance to visit a First Nation, something perhaps many students have never experienced before. While the SICC is located in a business centre on the English River First Nation, Myo says it offers a look at a "different side" of a First Nations community.

The National Aboriginal Day programming is just a small part of the work the SICC does to promote, protect and preserve First Nations languages and culture in Saskatchewan. Elders from SICC visit schools and community organizations to teach about the importance of preserving the traditions and language of First Nations people for future generations.

Hosting such a significant event for students gives SICC the opportunity to impact young people. It also gives students a chance to understand who their neighbours are. It's something the Centre takes very seriously.

"For us as a centre it gives us a chance to share and I think this is part of our legacy as First Nations people is that we continue to share our language, our culture with the rest of Saskatchewan and Canada," Myo says. "So this is part of our ongoing tradition, that we do it in a positive manner, but also we do it in a serious way as well. This is important to us. It's a way of building those bridges that need to happen."

The SICC's National Aboriginal Day activities are open to members of the public. To help the program run smoothly Myo encourages a quick call to the SICC to book enough space to accommodate groups of students. A bag lunch with hot dogs, juice box and potato chips will be provided. Activities start at 10 a.m. on Monday, June 22, at the SICC, located in the Grasswood commercial area south of Saskatoon, and end around 3 p.m.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/National+Aboriginal+learning+experience/11149767/story.html>

15 Stunning Aboriginal Artworks From Across Canada

The Huffington Post Canada | By [Jesse Ferreras](#)

Posted: 06/19/2015 1:22 pm EDT Updated: 06/19/2015 6:00 pm EDT

[National Aboriginal Day](#) arrives in Canada on June 21. It's a chance for Canadians to celebrate the culture and achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people.

We're celebrating the occasion by highlighting some stunning indigenous art from across the country.

The art comes in many forms, from sculpture, to paintings and prints. It taps all kinds of influences, from traditional forms to pop culture.

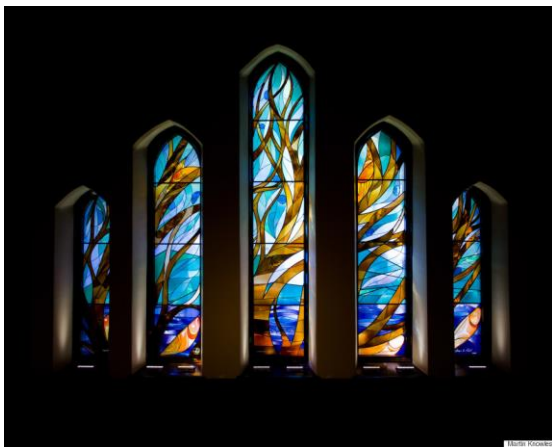
It has achieved international renown, and occupies prominent places in Canadian society.

Two of Bill Reid's sculptures, for example, adorn Canada's [\\$20 banknote](#). Brian Jungen's designs, famous for using sports paraphernalia, have been shown throughout the world, from Vancouver to Sydney.

And those are just a few examples of artworks that express the culture, the history and the voices of people who have lived on this land since time immemorial.

Here are 15 stunning examples of indigenous art from across Canada:

Susan Point — "Tree of Life"



(Image courtesy of Martin Knowles, Christ Church Cathedral Vancouver)

This gorgeous stained-glass window, by B.C. Musqueam artist Susan Point, can be found at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver. It depicts a tree supporting life such as salmon and birds, and is a tribute to the beautiful landscape the church occupies.

Susan Point — "Flight (Spindle Whorl)"



(Image courtesy of Vancouver Airport Authority)

The [world's largest spindle whorl](#) greets passengers arriving in Vancouver from all over the world. Set against a background featuring stone and a waterfall, it depicts flight through the images of an eagle and a man raising his arms.

Daphne Odjig — "Bad Medicine Woman"



(Image courtesy of © Senate of Canada)

Daphne Odjig, an Ojibway artist from the Wikwemikong Reserve in Ontario, was the first indigenous woman artist to have her work recognized, in the 1960s. Works such as

"[Bad Medicine Woman](#)" draw on themes such as mythology and shamanism, but she gives particular focus to women, and their roles as givers of life.

Brian Jungen — "Variant"



Courtesy of Catriona Jeffries Gallery

(Image courtesy of Catriona Jeffries)

Sports materials form a key part of the work of Brian Jungen, an artist of Dane-zaa ancestry. The sports industry has appropriated indigenous terms for teams such as the Washington Redskins and the Cleveland Indians. With "Variant," he repurposed Air Jordan sneakers to create something resembling a mask.

Robert Davidson — "Eagle Transforming"



Robert Davidson, an artist of Tlingit and Haida descent, has become one of Canada's most recognized artists with an extensive collection of masks, sculptures, paintings, totem poles and more. This mask depicts the eagle, a transformer figure that rules the sky.

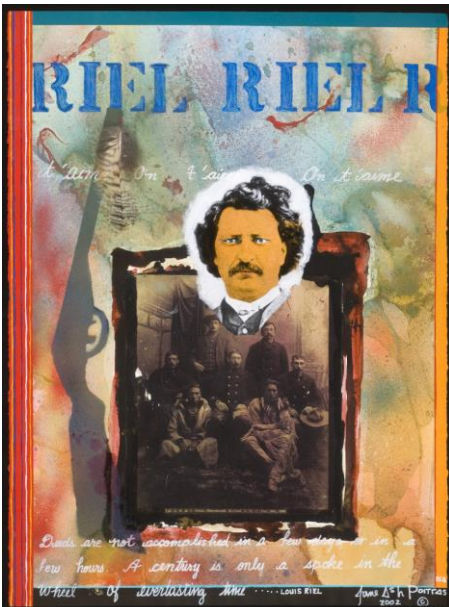
Andy Everson — "Fear"



(Image courtesy of [Andy Everson](#))

Pop cultural references take on whole new meanings in the work of [Andy Everson](#), an artist from the K'ómoks First Nation in B.C. His work "[Fear](#)" alters Darth Maul, a character from the "Star Wars" universe, to offer scathing commentary on treaty negotiations.

Jane Ash Poitras — "Riel - Riel - Riel"



(Image courtesy of © Senate of Canada)

Fort Chipewyan Cree artist Jane Ash Poitras is known for her collage-like technique, which incorporates photos. Here, she pays tribute to [Louis Riel](#), founder of the Metis and the province of Manitoba, by using a photo of the historical rebel leader and another of his provisional government. There is also a rifle with a feather at the mouth of its barrel, symbolizing a conflict that was meant to be carried out peacefully.

Bill Reid — "The Raven and the First Men"



(Image via Flickr user [Wee Sen Goh/License](#))

Haida sculptor Bill Reid (1920 to 1998) has taken on iconic status. One of his most powerful works is "[The Raven and the First Men](#)," which can be found at UBC's Museum of Anthropology. It tells the story of the mythical raven, and the part he played in creating humans.

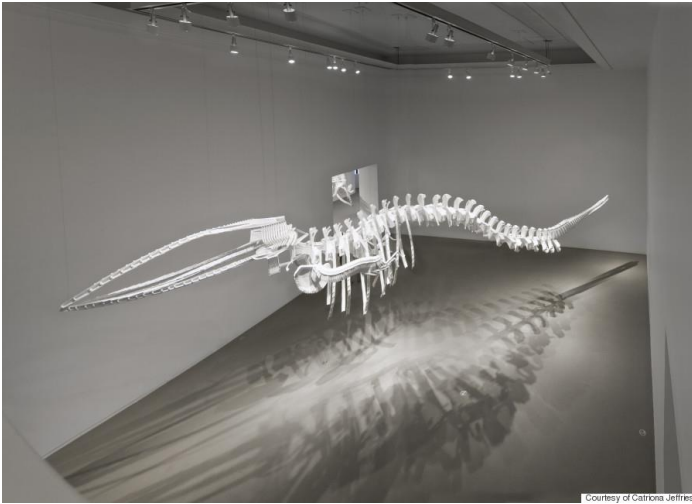
Bill Reid — "The Spirit of Haida Gwaii"



(Image courtesy of Vancouver Airport Authority)

Reid first designed "[The Spirit of Haida Gwaii](#)" at the urging of architect Arthur Erickson, who wanted a sculpture for the courtyard of the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. He came up with a canoe that carries 13 mythological Haida figures including the Raven, the Bear and the Wolf. A twin version, known as "The Jade Canoe," is situated in the international terminal at the Vancouver airport.

Brian Jungen — "Cetology"



(Image courtesy of Catriona Jeffries)

[Brian Jungen](#) has stunned the world with sculptures made of found materials. One of his greatest influences was his mother, who knew how to take objects and apply them to whole new uses. His spectacular "Cetology" depicts a giant whale skeleton made of deck chairs.

Luke Marston — "Bentwood Box"



(Image via Ashley Marston)

B.C. Coast Salish artist [Luke Marston](#) was tapped by the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) to fashion a box as a tribute to residential school survivors. The "Bentwood Box" was made out of one piece of red cedar, its panels carved to represent the cultures of Inuit, Metis and First Nations peoples.

David Garneau — "May Tea?"



(Image courtesy of © Senate of Canada)

Edmonton-based Metis artist David Garneau drew on the influence of comic illustrations for this painting. It shows a man saying "[May Tea?](#)" as though it were a question, depriving it of its meaning, and holding a hand to his neck in a reference to the hanging of Louis Riel.

Neal McLeod — "Wihtikow II"



(Image courtesy of © Senate of Canada)

This frightening work, by Neal McLeod of the James Smith Cree Nation in Saskatchewan, depicts the "[Wihtikow](#)," a sinister spirit in Cree culture that is known to eat human beings. But this depiction has a twist: the Wihtikow carries a cross in one hand, and human flesh in the other, symbolizing the influence of Christianity, and a people's separation from their own culture.

Alanis Obomsawin — "Indian Residential School 1934 - A prison or a school?"



(Image courtesy of © Senate of Canada)

Abenaki filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin is known for documentaries such as "Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance." But she's also a visual artist, as evidenced in [this piece](#), a commentary on the Indian residential school policy that took children away from their homes, their families, and their traditions.

Fred Degrace — "Woman"



(Image courtesy of [Inuit Gallery of Vancouver](#))

Inuit artist Fred Degrace hails from Coral Harbour, Nunavut. He has produced a series of sculptures that depict a traditional way of life up north, from polar bears to narwhals. His sculpture "Woman," seen above, is made of stone and leather.

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/06/19/aboriginal-art-canada_n_7539490.html

Debut novel a funny, moving tale

By Eric Volmers, Calgary Herald June 20, 2015

Being timely is generally a good thing for a novelist.

But it's hard to feel very celebratory about the circumstances that made Alberta Cree-Metis author Tracey Lindberg's debut novel, *Birdie*, so topical when it was released just a few weeks ago.

At roughly the same time, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released a damning 381-page report after a six-year study that outlined the shameful history of residential schools. It concluded that Canada's removal of aboriginal children from their families and forcing them into abusive, Christian-run schools resulted in "cultural genocide."

The impact of colonization - or as Lindberg calls it, "the colonization bomb" - hovers over *Birdie*, a funny, sad and occasionally harrowing tale of Cree woman Bernice Meetoos' journey from northern Alberta to Gibsons, B.C. She is in search of Pat John, the First Nations actor who played Jesse in the long-running CBC series *The Beachcombers*.

While *Birdie* has been described as part travelogue and part dream quest, the history of colonization haunts Bernice on her journey. Lindberg says she hopes her novel, which delves into colonization's legacy of sexual violence and economic deprivation, adds to whatever conversation and soul-searching the commission's report creates in Canada.

"Conversation is the operative word here," says Lindberg, who was born in Kelly Lake Cree Nation and is a citizen of As'in'i'wa'chi Ni'yaw National Rocky Mountain Cree. "I keep thinking about the dialogue and the questions we don't ask. I think often we are afraid to have a conversation because everybody is worried they are going to give offence. That whole notion of reconciliation itself really has to do with taking responsibility for your own stuff and owning it and then being able to sit down and have a broader, more intensive dialogue about what that means. "I hope something like this (novel) takes another different entry point. Maybe narrative gives people a different place to be able to springboard their ideas about how it is we can most nicely and compatibly get along together in Canada."

If that sounds a little academic, it's because Lindberg has spent much of her career in that field. The first aboriginal woman in Canada to complete her graduate law degree at Harvard University, Lindberg was an award-winning academic writer and activist before she turned her hand to fiction. She teaches Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Laws at Athabasca

University and the University of Ottawa and is a sought-after speaker with expertise in Indigenous traditional law and Aboriginal women's issues.

But *Birdie* is anything but stuffy. It's funny, albeit often darkly so, and packed full of memorable characters. Bernice, or *Birdie*, is an intriguing protagonist who refuses to be defeated by a dark secret from her past. Using *The Beachcombers*, a TV series that ran

from 1972 to 1990, also gives the tale a nostalgic hue. The show is a cultural touchstone for many, including Lindberg.

"There were so few places in popular culture where we could see indigenous peoples at all," Lindberg says. "I remember seeing (Pat John). In the novel, Bernice thinks of him and the list of things she wants: an Indian man who is healthy and working. That's him. For me, as a young girl to be watching TV and to see that native people could be a part of the arts, that native people could come into your home through television, was really empowering."

"What I want people to understand is that things that happen to you are not you," Lindberg says.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/Debut+novel+funny+moving+tale/11153257/story.html>

Aboriginal Day hits the right tone, as community shares



National Aboriginal Day was celebrated in Guelph Sunday, June 21, 2015, at Market Square with drumming, dancing, fiddle playing and a variety of other activities.

Guelph Mercury

By [Tony Saxon](#)

Jun 21, 2015

GUELPH — Sunday was a chance for Aboriginal peoples in Guelph to celebrate their culture and for others to learn a bit about that culture.

For the first time Guelph held its own National Aboriginal Day celebrations, a fun-filled event that took place at a sun-drenched Market Square attended by a crowd of roughly 250 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

"It's very important. A wonderful opportunity for Aboriginal peoples to celebrate and for those that don't know much about our cultures to be exposed to it," said Jennifer Parkinson, president of the Grand River Métis council.

"It's a wonderful turnout. More than I expected," Parkinson said. "This year we wanted to keep it small because it's our first one, but I've already talked to the mayor and we think we can make this a big event next year."

June 21 was declared National Aboriginal Day 19 years ago by the federal government, but Sunday was the first time a local celebration has officially been held in the Royal City.

June 21 was chosen in part because it is the summer solstice, the longest day of daylight in the year and the first day of summer.

The celebration began with a smudging ceremony for those wanting to participate, then moved on to some short speeches and a drumming circle.

The highlight of the afternoon came when Métis fiddler Rajan Dornan-Anderson got people up doing the jig.

Traditional bannock samples and kids activities were held off to the side.

"Please join us today and have an open heart and an open mind. Welcome all of you," said Cree community elder Lois MacDonald in an opening blessing.

"I ask the creator that we all come together as one heart, one mind, one voice, one community. No matter where we come from or where we are going, we will always be together,"

Paul Smith told the crowd how National Aboriginal Day grew out of 1982 when the Assembly of First Nations suggested the creation of a National Aboriginal Solidarity Day.

In the early 1990s, following the Aboriginal/government conflicts in Oka, Que., the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended the forming of National Aboriginal Day on June 21.

In speaking to the gathering, Jan Sherman talked of how Guelph was once the land of the First Nation Attawandaron people, who were a peace-loving tribe that did not take part in conflicts between the French and English.

"They were referred to as 'the neutrals' by the Europeans," said Sherman, adding that Guelph was also known as "the meeting place" because of the convergence of two rivers, which made it a good place to rest and to trade.

Sherman later led the drumming circle.

Guelph mayor Cam Guthrie said a few words and drew loud cheers from the crowd when he said that Monday's meeting of city council would begin by recognizing National Aboriginal Day.

Direct Link: <http://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/5688927-aboriginal-day-hits-the-right-tone-as-community-shares/>

A proud celebration of culture

[Tyler Clarke](#)

Published on June 21, 2015



Published on June 21, 2015

The colour party shares a laugh prior to their grand entry at Kinsmen Park's National Aboriginal Day festivities on Sunday. Eagle staff carrier Quentin Tootosis of Poundmaker Cree Nation headed the group.

Festivities in Kinsmen Park celebrated a proud aboriginal culture on Sunday

Dayna Moore, 13, received her eagle feather fan from her grandmother, Barbara Garvin, who in turn received it from an elder when she was younger.

On Sunday, Moore proudly danced with the fan during National Aboriginal Day festivities in Kinsmen Park.

Elected as Northern Lights Casino Powwow Princess, Moore learned the traditional customs and techniques related to powwow from her elders, as most aboriginal people do.

"I first learned from my grandma and she wanted to tell me about the powwow and how to dance, so I became a dancer," she explained.

Dressed to the nines in colourful regalia that included beads, shells, feathers and fabric, Moore was given some of her regalia's components from family and elders on Red Earth Cree Nation while others she either made or had assistance making.

Moore was one of a handful of people donning traditional regalia during Sunday's colour party march for the festivities' grand entry.

Leading the way was well-known powwow dancer Quentin Tootosis of Poundmaker Cree Nation.

Carrying the eagle staff which he said represents "the bond between us and the spiritual world," Tootosis blessed the ground as he went, clearing the way for those who followed.

This level of cultural confidence and sense of self-identity are keys to finding success, event emcee Conrad Burns said during his opening remarks, noting that these three things are tightly linked.

Pleased to see the level at which local area aboriginal people are proud of their culture and heritage, Burns commended those who came out for the day's festivities.

"Nowhere else is like Prince Albert."

Direct Link: <http://www.paherald.sk.ca/News/Local/2015-06-21/article-4189851/A-proud-celebration-of-culture/1>

First Nations history being shared with Parksville Qualicum Beach youth



Linda Ermineskin leads students from Oceanside Elementary in a traditional aboriginal dance at the Qualicum Beach Farmers Market on Saturday.

posted Jun 23, 2015 at 9:00 AM

CARLI BERRY

National Aboriginal Day was celebrated a day early at the Qualicum Beach Farmers' Market on Saturday, when students from Oceanside Elementary performed two traditional aboriginal dances along with their teacher.

"We're losing our culture as First Nations. If I don't share what we have then we're going to lose it, and these students love it," said Linda Ermineskin, First Nations liaison for Oceanside Elementary.

The first dance was to welcome the market and students used paddles to mimic the rowing of a canoe. The second was more personal, a form of prayer that was created by Ermineskin's brother that used eagle feathers to symbolize getting over a difficult time-period in one's life.

"I'm very proud to be sharing my culture with Oceanside," Ermineskin said.

National Aboriginal Day was Sunday.

"I wanted to introduce aboriginal culture and food to the market," said Lorne MacCallum, president of the market.

MacCallum said Qualicum First Nations Chief Michael Recalma was enthusiastic towards the idea of adding more First Nations culture to the market.

"The word Qualicum means from where the dog salmon are from," MacCallum said.

"The Qualicum First Nations lived here for thousands of years successfully without doing a whole bunch of damage and then as the world evolved and more western cultures (came), things (changed), but it would be neat to make sure people realize there was a history here before what we all see today," MacCallum said.

Ermineskin has been spreading First Nations culture at elementary schools for years.

A majority of First Nations history was recorded in stories and oral communications, Ermineskin said.

Teaching the students and passing down this culture is important because it's the only way to keep the culture alive, Ermineskin said.

"When that culture vanishes or disappears that culture is gone forever," she said.

Direct Link: <http://www.pqbnews.com/news/309329191.html>

First Nations celebrate heritage

By [Kyle Lincez](#), The Northern Times

Tuesday, June 23, 2015 10:04:29 EDT AM



Marcia Chum delivers a rousing traditional hand drum song during Aboriginal Day's opening ceremonies.

The Kapuskasing Indian Friendship Centre celebrated Aboriginal heritage and culture on June 19, as an early celebration of National Aboriginal Day.

The day's events began with an opening ceremony that involved smudging, a prayer delivered by an elder, a traditional hand drum song, and a speech by Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing MP Carole Hughes, before leading into a host of activities such as archery and face painting, and a lunch.

Marcia Chum, Urban Aboriginal Healthy Lifestyle Coordinator, said that the day's events saw a great turnout.

“We had over 200 people for an hour playing and enjoying the activities.”

She said that the event is important to observe because it helps bridge the gap between cultures.

“I think it's very important to introduce everyone to each other's respective cultures, and we're lucky that we have the opportunity to celebrate ours with everyone.”

A perspective hat Carole Hughes shares.

“It's really a great opportunity to celebrate a unique heritage and culture, and allow us to get a better understanding of First Nations communities and their achievements.”

Next year's celebrations will include more of a focus on cultural awareness, Chum said.

“We're currently looking at bringing more information on what the medicines are, the different teachings, and hand drumming workshops.”

Direct Link: <http://www.kapuskasingtimes.com/2015/06/23/first-nations-celebrate-heritage>

Aboriginal Day tour in Victoria highlights past, future

[Katherine Dedyna](#) / Times Colonist
June 23, 2015 04:18 AM



Local dignitaries, including Lt.-Gov. Judith Guichon, Esquimalt Nation hereditary chief Andy Thomas and Songhees Chief Ron Sam, took part in a special Aboriginal Day tour underneath the Fairmont Empress.

The hotel sits over an area that was once a body of water known as James Bay that supported prime clamming grounds for First Nations.

Standing far below ground in the grey and understandably grim bowels of the Fairmont Empress hotel, Esquimalt Nation hereditary chief Andy Thomas spreads his arms wide apart.

“This whole area was James Bay,” he said to other dignitaries deep underground with him, including Lt.-Gov. Judith Guichon, Songhees Chief Ron Sam and local mayors taking the ultimate off-the-beaten-track tour.

Before construction of the Empress began more than a century ago, James Bay was a body of water that supported prime clamming grounds for First Nations. A favoured tying-up place for canoes, its mud flats included a tidal estuary for an above-ground stream that, until 1860, took cedar canoes rapidly through what is now Fairfield to Ross Bay and ocean waters. There is no longer a body of water named James Bay.

It was a strange but fitting place to be Sunday for the first meeting in nearly a century between the two hereditary chiefs and the Queen’s representative in B.C., said philanthropist Derek Sanderson, who with his wife, Julie, arranged the meeting on National Aboriginal Day on Sunday.

An elegant breakfast upstairs in the hotel preceded the basement tour that also marked the first time aboriginal representatives had seen the enormous concrete pylons that surround all 2,080 Douglas fir trees driven into the swampy land to support construction.

“You can imagine how high they were,” said hotel general manager Don Fennerty as he warned people to watch their heads while they meandered for the better part of a city block underground.

After the Empress tour, which included the grandeur of the Crystal Ballroom, the local leaders’ outing took in new buildings and dances and drumming on two reserves near Admirals Road before heading to the aboriginal festival outside the Royal B.C. Museum.

It’s the first time Guichon had visited the traditional territories, Sanderson said.

Esquimalt’s new Big House is a community “stronghold” and stands as “our gift to the kids of the future,” Thomas said. He noted that 60 per cent of the band is under age 16. “It’s a good problem to have.”

Built at a cost of about \$2 million, it boasts a modern kitchen, huge light-filled dining area and a long house with earthen floor, fire pits and wooden walls.

About 150 people live in about 40 homes on the reserve and some move into the long house in winter.

“It’s a beautiful life we have. Simple is tough sometimes,” Thomas said. Still, he is grateful to be living in a time when “good change” is coming in the relationships between First Nations and the rest of the culture.

Looking out the back window of the centre at what is now federal Department of Defence land, Thomas noted there were very few senior members left in the Esquimalt First Nation in 1911. “The government just about wiped us out,” he said.

At the Songhees reserve, where about 300 people live in 100 houses, the Wellness Centre has pride of place.

“Our whole community is under one roof,” said Sam, citing health, education, band administration and an elders’ room. There’s even children’s programming for early teaching of traditional art techniques and a gym acoustically designed not to echo that can also be transformed into a dining room for 450.

Esquimalt Mayor Barb Desjardins called the centre “an amazing success.”

Sam said discussion and collaboration with non-First Nations is happening more than in the past. Natives and non-natives won’t always agree but instead of taking offence, they need to “find a middle ground and move forward with all the people in this region.”

By the enormous cedar loon sculpture outside the front doors, carver Clarence Dick explained its significance as a symbol of serenity. But because it’s hollowed out on one side, it’s also “the biggest ladle in the world,” he said.

Dick worked on the loon with his father, Butch Dick, and a team of carvers.

Later, in a speech in front of the Royal B.C. Museum honouring First Nations “wisdom, culture and heritage,” Guichon said there has been great change in the 17 years since National Aboriginal Day was first celebrated.

“The process of acknowledging the grave mistakes made in the past has been long and painful, but we are slowly developing an understanding of each other’s cultures and the need to operate from a basis of trust and respect rather than out of fear,” she said. “Only then can we build healthy communities for all our children and grandchildren.”

Massive global challenges such as melting ice caps and millions of refugees on the move will require “the wisdom and expertise” of everyone, especially the experience of elders, she said.

Only three years ago, Oak Bay Mayor Nils Jensen recalled that a First Nations man told him he had never been to Oak Bay before because he did not feel welcome there.

“It was a motivation for us to start building bridges,” Jensen said, adding there will be a First Nations welcoming pole for the new Oak Bay high school.

Elder MaryAnn Thomas said “it’s good to see us all come together because we’re the teachers of the younger generation.”

A survivor of residential schools, she said her head was forced into a toilet bowl for so-called infractions, but she’s taken her father’s advice not to dwell on abuse and to forgive the nun and priest involved. “I’m really grateful to my father for that heart teaching.”

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/life/aboriginal-day-tour-in-victoria-highlights-past-future-1.1976524#sthash.o2kmWgNp.dpuf>

Aboriginal Business & Finance

GLASS ACT: First Nations winery blends creative, fiscal goals

MOIRA PETERS Glass Act

Published June 19, 2015 - 6:24pm

Last Updated June 19, 2015 - 6:26pm



Nk'Mip Cellars in B.C.'s Okanagan Valley is North America's first winery that is owned and operated by aboriginals.

Cool kids in the wine world are all talking about earth, dropping buzzwords like sustainability and terroir, with good reason.

Honouring the earth that provides us with the joy of sipping a glass of wine makes sense. Identifying the aromas, flavours and textures in that glass that make it particular to this piece of land offers a satisfying sense of belonging.

It would be hard to deny that anyone is entitled to this sense of belonging more than the first people to live on and work the land. Sunday is National Aboriginal Day, an

opportune time to explore the craft of Nk'Mip Cellars, North America's first aboriginal-owned and -operated winery.

[Nk'Mip Cellars](#) is located in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia, on the Osoyoos Indian Band's 13,000-hectare reserve. In the Syilx language, Nk'Mip (pronounced "Inkameep") names the piece of valley floor at the north end of the Osoyoos Lake where it meets the Okanagan River. Nk'Mip's vineyard stretches over 120 hectares.

Nk'Mip Cellars is a story of economic success, one that would be incomplete without mentioning Chief Clarence Louie, who, at the age of 24, was elected chief of the band in 1984. He formed the Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corp., which now owns nine businesses, including a championship golf course, a construction company, a cement plant, a resort and the winery.

Much time in the wine world is given to conversations about subtle expressions of earth and craft. When I asked the chief in a phone interview what it meant to him to open a winery on the land his people have worked for thousands of years, he skipped the romance.

"It means creating jobs and making money," he said. "We live in a wine-growing region. To get off welfare, you do what is in your region."

Louie is an adamant proponent of jobs for First Nations people, saying employment is the best way to alleviate economic, social and emotional crises.

"When natives are poor, people don't pay attention," he said, explaining how treaty relationships in much of Canada turned into relationships of dependence on the state that nobody wants to deal with.

"We have good relationships with our neighbours; we have business relationships. That's the original intent of the treaties," Louie said.

"We provide hundreds of jobs. We have more jobs than band members."

Non-natives have held jobs on the Osoyoos reserve for 35 years.

Basic social supports like education and health care are also part of the band's initiatives, as is the preservation of culture, particularly language. The proceeds from premium wine tastings at Nk'Mip Cellars go toward preserving the Osoyoos language.

Osoyoos band member Justin Hall worked in Australia and studied enology and viticulture in New Zealand, and is now assistant winemaker at Nk'Mip. His wine has won awards nationally and internationally, including the 2012 Qwam Qwmt ("achieving excellence" in the Okanagan language) Chardonnay that won best Canadian white at the 2014 Decanter World Wine Awards.

Nk'Mip's wine can be found at Cristal Wine Merchants, Harvest Wines & Spirits and Rockhead Beer & Wine Market in Halifax. I sampled the 2010 VQA Riesling (\$25), which shows classic aromas of lime peel and Vaseline. The riper fruit I smelled — maybe peach? — and 13 per cent alcohol betray its birthplace: the Okanagan Valley, containing Canada's only desert, is a warm wine region, producing full-bodied wines with either high alcohol or high sugar from fully ripe grapes. This wine, however, is impressively refreshing.

The 2009 VQA Merlot (\$30), meanwhile, offers no pretence of lightness. It shows its age, with aromas of your uncle's old cigar box and your aunt's boozy fruitcake. It is smooth as can be going down the hatch, and its 14.5 per cent alcohol and gentle tannic bite only surface post-swallow. This wine adds to my growing conviction that the Okanagan produces some of the best iterations of Merlot, the grape everyone loves to hate.

Nk'Mip Cellars is part of a bigger socio-economic and cultural success story for the band; unfortunately, many First Nations communities in Canada struggle for economic well-being and access to health care and education, finding less access to the land they once lived and worked.

Our access to terroir in wine depends on access to land. Today, we are being presented with opportunities to redefine our relationships to the first peoples of this land, giving us the opportunity for a very new appreciation of terroir.

Direct Link: <http://thechronicleherald.ca/artslife/1294164-glass-act-first-nations-winery-blends-creative-fiscal-goals>

Here's a Reason to Celebrate on National Aboriginal Day

Posted: 06/20/2015 11:39 am EDT Updated: 06/20/2015 11:59 am EDT

[Ravina Bains](#), Associate Director of the Fraser Institute's Centre for Aboriginal Policy Studies



A small First Nations community called Whitecap Dakota, located just outside of Saskatoon, has a lot to celebrate on National Aboriginal Day. Whitecap Dakota describes itself as a [modern and progressive](#) First Nation with a proud culture and a strong sense of community. It has [630 members](#), of whom 47 per cent live on reserve, and it is governed by one chief and only two councillors.

For the past 21 years the community has been led by Chief Darcy Bear, who was first elected as chief at the age of 26. When he took office the unemployment rate on reserve [was 70 per cent](#), the on-reserve education system was broken and the small community was running a deficit of \$350,000. With the support of his council and community, Chief Bear has brought the unemployment rate down to five per cent and has created business opportunities that have generated [over \\$6.7 million annually](#) in own-source revenue. The community now has an education system on reserve that is so successful that non-First Nations parents in neighbouring Saskatoon want to send their children to his reserve school.

So what is the secret to Whitecap Dakota's success?

Partnerships, openness to business and getting out from under the Indian Act.

In regards to education, a recent [Fraser Institute study](#) demonstrated that the lack of education standards has left some First Nation schools with no core curriculum to meet provincial standards and no requirement that educators on-reserve have provincial certification. To address these issues, Chief Bear developed a partnership with the local Saskatoon Public School Division. "We created a joint governance committee, joint operations committee, all second level services are provided by the local school division and all teachers in our school are members of the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation," he said. These standards have increased graduation rates and created an exceptional education system at Whitecap Dakota.

To stimulate economic growth, Chief Bear knew he had to get his community out from under the archaic Indian Act land provisions. "The Indian Act was not created to enable First Nation communities to be a part of the economy, it was created to segregate us from society and keep us out of sight and out of mind," he said. In fact, [our research](#) has shown that archaic land provisions and lack of property rights on reserve has made First Nations members wards of the state and unable to enjoy the same economic opportunities as all other Canadians. In 2013, Whitecap Dakota joined the First Nations Land Management regime, which eliminated land provisions under the Indian Act and allowed the community to create their own land laws and move at the speed of business without intervention from the federal government.

Chief Bear also attracted private investment to his community by opening up the band's financial books, making Whitecap Dakota's audited financial statements public long before the *First Nations Transparency Act*, which requires the public disclosure of a band's audited financial statements. Furthermore, the council's salary and expenses are

funded through the community's [own-source revenue](#) -- no taxpayer dollars go towards paying the chief or councillors salaries.

And it's all paid dividends for the community. Today, Whitecap Dakota has approximately \$100 million of capital investment in their community from the private sector and a five per cent unemployment rate. "All these revenues enable us to move forward and build a sustainable community," he said. This prosperity has also benefited the city of Saskatoon. Whitecap Dakota now employs more than 500 people from Saskatoon and recently contributed \$2.7 million towards the construction of a new Saskatoon school where only 10 per cent of the student body will be from Whitecap Dakota.

There are many other communities like Whitecap Dakota who have silently achieved tremendous success across Canada, such as the Haisla Nation in British Columbia and Fort McKay in Alberta.

So while it is important to highlight communities who are struggling with high unemployment rates and substandard living conditions, let's not forget to celebrate successful communities like Whitecap Dakota, and inspirational leaders like Chief Darcy Bear, during this year's National Aboriginal Day. Because as Chief Bear said "when First Nations are successful the region is successful."

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/ravina-bains/national-aboriginal-day_b_7623378.html

Peguis First Nation finds a casino

By: [Dan Lett](#)

Posted: 06/20/2015 3:00 AM

The Manitoba government has always maintained that it would not allow a First Nations casino to operate near or in Winnipeg. But there are signs that position may be changing.

Peguis First Nation, which is involved in a joint venture with Assiniboia Downs, is trying to work out a deal to relocate the Aseneskak Casino on the Opaskwayak Cree Nation near The Pas to land near Assiniboia Downs. Aseneskak is controlled by a limited partnership made up of the first nations of the Swampy Cree Tribal Council.



Deal would allow casino to do long-range planning.

A copy of the draft memo of understanding, obtained by the Free Press, clearly lays out the process by which Asen eskak Casino would be relocated to land in Winnipeg owned, or soon-to-be owned, by Peguis First Nation.

The MOU acknowledges no relocation can take place without advance approval of the Manitoba government. However, it states that "the Manitoba government has agreed to consider providing its consent to the relocation of the Asen eskak Casino... to Peguis lands or Peguis reserve lands located in Winnipeg in or near the Assiniboia Downs."

Peguis Chief Cindy Spence could not be reached for comment, but former chief Glenn Hudson confirmed Peguis had been talking to the First Nations that control Asen eskak about moving it to Winnipeg. Moreover, Hudson said he personally talked with Premier Greg Selinger and Dave Chomiak, the minister responsible for gaming, on several occasions about moving Asen eskak to Winnipeg.

"I certainly broached the idea two or three times with both Chomiak and Premier Selinger," said Hudson, who lost an election to Spence in March. "They both said they would take it back and consider it and discuss it with their people."

Bringing another casino to Winnipeg and vicinity is a potentially controversial move for the Selinger government. So controversial, in fact, that the only way to make sense of it is to remember there is a provincial election less than 10 months from now.

Perhaps because of the potential for controversy, the various parties to this complex deal were particularly hard to reach on Friday.

Officials with the Manitoba Jockey Club, owners and operators of Assiniboia Downs, did not respond to requests for interviews. The club has been working with Peguis on a joint venture to build a hotel and conference centre near the race track on Winnipeg's western edge.

A request to speak with Chomiak was refused. In a statement, a provincial spokesman said the government was unaware there was a draft MOU between Peguis and the Asen eskak partnership.

"We can confirm that neither Minister Chomiak nor the premier has stated support for any such proposal," the statement said.

The spokesman noted the province just signed a 20-year licence agreement with Asen eskak this year and relocation was not discussed. As well, he noted neither the province nor the Manitoba-AMC First Nations gaming joint committee have received any formal request for relocation.

And yet, it appears that in some quarters, there is more than a hope this could happen.

This is an issue that has an echo of the controversy swirling around the Selinger government over attempts to use an untendered contract to buy \$5 million worth of flood-fighting equipment for Interlake First Nations. It even involves many of the same people.

Essentially, this is an allegation of promises being made outside of normal channels by a government facing down a date with voters who have become, if pre-election polls are right, very cool to the idea of re-electing the NDP for another four years.

Since approving Aseneskak and South Beach casino on the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation north of Winnipeg, the NDP government has been quite reluctant to consider additional aboriginal casinos. Not that there haven't been numerous attempts by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to get them to move off that position.

That has led, in recent years, to two new facilities. There are plans in the works to open a new casino in Thompson on land owned by Nisichawaysihk First Nation. As well, last year, the Sand Hills Casino in Carberry opened on land owned by Sioux Valley Dakota First Nation.

Yet, the province has steadfastly opposed to any new casinos in or around Winnipeg that might compete with the two government-owned gaming palaces, McPhillips Street Station and Club Regent.

First Nations have long resented that stance, given the best opportunities to maximize casino revenues come from being located in or near Manitoba's biggest cities. The decision to allow True North Sports & Entertainment, owners of the Winnipeg Jets, to open a mini-casino across from its downtown arena only poured salt in the First Nations' wound.

The pressure to open up the Winnipeg market ramped up again, it appears, with the deal between the Manitoba Jockey Club and Peguis to redevelop the land around the racetrack.

The jockey club and Peguis have talked openly about pursuing a casino should the province be open to the idea. However, both parties insisted that a casino was not essential to their plans.

Manitoba, in particular, and Winnipeg, in general, are becoming pretty saturated with gaming opportunities. You would be hard-pressed to find any comparable Canadian city that has so many casinos within its jurisdiction.

However, this is clearly a government looking harder and harder for ways of finding political traction on a path to re-election that is become more and more slippery all the time.

Perhaps Hudson and the other parties to the jockey club-Peguis venture are too willing to see their glass half-full when it comes to future casino opportunities. And then again,

maybe they have friends in government who are willing to top them off as we head closer to an election.

Direct Link: <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/peguis-first-nation-finds-a-casino-308610931.html>

Promoting aboriginal prosperity

Postmedia Network

First posted: Monday, June 22, 2015 08:23 PM EDT | Updated: Monday, June 22, 2015 10:11 PM EDT



Various First Nations walk to honour residential school survivors in Vancouver, British Columbia June 11, 2015. Approximately 150,000 aboriginal children attended residential schools from the 1840s to the 1990s, which attempted to eradicate the aboriginal culture and assimilate children into mainstream Canada, said a long-awaited report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. REUTERS/Ben Nelms

In addition to celebrating Father's Day on Sunday many Canadians also celebrated National Aboriginal Day, which fell on the same day this year.

While the event is always a celebration of aboriginal heritage and culture, it was also political this year.

That's no surprise.

The lingering energies of Idle No More, the conversation around murdered and missing aboriginal women and the Truth and Reconciliation commission report have all brought aboriginal issues to the foreground.

Not just for Canada's aboriginal population, but for all Canadians as well.

First Nations people's aspirations have been prominent on the national stage – the desire for opportunity, education, good health, stability and economic prosperity.

As a consequence, there is there heightened realization on the part of all Canadians that these aspirations are fair and reasonable and ones we collectively share.

And equally important, there is a heightened and troublesome realization that for many aboriginal Canadians, the gap between aspiration and actuality is profound.

We've previously used this space to write about the recommendations in the TRC report that we support and think are productive, and there are many.

However, another recent report by the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, helps clarify what should be starting place for real reconciliation.

As quoted by Sun Ottawa bureau chief David Akin, board's chair Chief Clarence Louie, of the Osoyoos Indian Band said:

“We’ve got to get back our own economic strength and the way that we do that is create our own businesses, our own land leases and make our own sources of revenue,” Louie said. “Sure, we should still fight those treaty issues, those 100-year-old issues that’ll be around for another hundred years on unresolved land claims. Keep on fighting those issues. But my home base and the duty I’ve been doing as a chief is creating jobs and making money.”

Create jobs then everything else follows.

Governments, NGOs, corporations and reserves should be doing all they can to collaborate with aboriginal communities to build the sort of prosperity Chief Louie is talking about.

Direct Link: <http://www.torontosun.com/2015/06/22/promoting-aboriginal-prosperity>

Aboriginal Community Development

New garden reflects Aboriginal teachings

By Rachel Ward, Edmonton Journal June 19, 2015

EDMONTON - A garden that celebrates First Nations culture has opened at the Shaw Conference Centre.

The new community medicine wheel garden, a first for Edmonton, overlooks the river valley and is open to the public.

It was unveiled Thursday during a celebration of National Aboriginal Day, observed annually on June 21, that included music by fiddler Daniel Gervais.

“If we think back about the origins of this place that we call Edmonton, we understand that this was a gathering place for our First Peoples,” centre vice-president and general manager Cliff Higuchi said. “This allows us to have something overlooking the river valley that helps people understand some of that rich history and tradition that we have here in Edmonton.”

Such gardens are traditionally considered sacred spaces for healing and peace. They are circular and broken into sections to reflect Aboriginal culture and teaching.

The garden has almost a dozen plants indigenous to the area, such as sage, sweetgrass, wild strawberries and echinacea.

Direct Link:

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/garden+reflects+Aboriginal+teachings/11148510/story.html>

National Aboriginal Day: 6 events that changed the conversation

Monumental moments from Meech Lake to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report

By Maeengan Linklater, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 20, 2015 5:00 AM ET Last Updated: Jun 20, 2015 5:00 AM ET



Aboriginal leader Elijah Harper, a former Manitoba MLA and MP, played a key role in defeating the Meech Lake accord. ((Wayne Glowacki/Winnipeg Free Press/Canadian Press))

Aboriginal Day is going to be celebrated this Sunday, June 21, 2015. Celebrations will be held across the country — which makes me reflect on the past 25 years when it comes to indigenous peoples and Canada.

Certain events have highlighted the conversation involving the rising voice of indigenous peoples in today's society.

So without further ado, I would like to share with you "The Maeengan Top Five-ish List of Monumental Moments of Indigenous Milestones and Opportunities Lost in Aboriginal/Canadian Relations, Conversation, and Reconciliation."

1. The Meech Lake Accord (1990)

Then-prime minister Brian Mulroney hatched a scheme to amend the Canadian Constitution in order to bring Quebec into the fold. The only problem was that he neglected to include Aboriginal Peoples into the discussion.

[Elijah Harper killed Meech Lake when he said 'No.'](#)

As a result, Mulroney went back to the drawing board and came out with the Charlottetown Accord. This time around, he included First Nations representatives in the negotiations on amending the Constitution, which included Aboriginal Peoples as "one of three orders of government."

In the end, it was rejected by all Canadians in a national referendum, and it set precedent to include aboriginal leaders in matters that pertained to them.

2. The Oka Crisis (1990)

Weeks after the Meech Lake Accord bled on the steps of the Manitoba Legislative building, [a land dispute exploded between the Town of Oka and the Mohawks of Kanesatake.](#)



A sign that translates as "Let us live in peace with our Mohawk friends" is visible to soldiers walking to position near Indian barricade at Oka, Que., on Aug. 21, 1990. (Bill Grimshaw/Canadian Press)

This galvanized First Nations people across the country to stand shoulder to shoulder with Kanesatake during the summer of 1990. The Mohawks were protecting a burial ground from being developed into a golf course. In Winnipeg, a peace camp was set up in solidarity (where at least one baby was conceived).

When the crisis ended 78 days later, Mulroney launched the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, a national inquiry that examined the relationship between Canada and Aboriginal Peoples. It offered amazing recommendations to be implemented, and it enabled aboriginal organizations a wealth of information to use in formulation of project proposals.

Unfortunately, it was placed on a shelf, where it continues to gather dust.

3. Phil Fontaine discloses personal abuse in residential school (1990)



Phil Fontaine, a former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, had spent time at a residential school before launching his political career. (Adrian Wyld/Canadian Press)

When he was grand chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, [Phil Fontaine was the first high-profile indigenous leader to disclose his experience of abuse as a child while in residential school.](#)

His story flung open doors and shed light into Canada's darkest periods of history.

When Fontaine became national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, he was instrumental in the negotiation of the Indian Residential Schools Agreement, which established compensation for over 80,000 survivors, and the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

The Government of Canada issued an apology to the survivors of residential schools in 2008.

4. Idle No More (2012)



Drawn to the sound of the drum, a downtown employee snaps a photo of the New Year's Eve 2014 round dance at Portage and Main in Winnipeg. (Eman Agpalza / ARP Books)

With fear of losing their federal funding pervading amongst aboriginal organizations, Idle No More activists organized teach-ins on Bill C-45.

[Round dances exploded across the country](#) in direct response to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's imposed policies on indigenous peoples and communities.

We can thank Harper for inspiring indigenous peoples to start organizing amongst themselves, to educate themselves and Canadians on indigenous issues, and to build their capacity to "create community at the grassroots level."

5. #MMIW (2014)



Fifteen-year-old Tina Fontaine's body was recovered from the Red River on Aug. 17, 2014. (CBC)

The RCMP report on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls established the number of 1,181 indigenous women who were murdered or missing.

[Combined with Tina Fontaine's murder, it raised the awareness to a new level](#) and brought thousands of people, indigenous and non-indigenous together. As well, it has moved some political parties to call for a national inquiry into MMIW.

6. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Report (2015)

I can't finish this list without including and acknowledging today's opportunity only because the ink has not had the opportunity to dry yet. But, I am optimistic it will create deep and inherent change at multiple levels, and with Canadians from all walks of life.



Manitoba Justice Murray Sinclair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission says he wants to change people's attitudes about education and make aboriginal people proud of their everyday accomplishments. (CBC)

[It is the first government report to describe Indian residential schools as an act of genocide](#), and the first report that doesn't place too much faith in the current government implementing it.

But then again, lead commissioner Justice Murray Sinclair said all Canadians carry the responsibility for carrying out the recommendations.

So now we — both indigenous and non-indigenous — can think about what we can do to carry the conversation forward, looking beyond the the government policy, frameworks, and reports, and focusing on the humanity of indigenous peoples.

And on National Aboriginal Day, I'm going to wake up and I'm going to say, "Today is a good day to live."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/national-aboriginal-day-6-events-that-changed-the-conversation-1.3120843>

Fluffy story: Arctic hamlet opens eiderdown factory to feather its nest

By The Canadian Press June 21, 2015



With no caribou on their islands, Inuit on the Belcher Islands have relied on eider ducks for food and clothing for generations. Here, an Inuit woman wearing a traditional eider skin parka collects duck eggs in a still photo from the film "People of a Feather." THE CANADIAN PRESS/ HO-Joel Heath

SANIKILUAQ, Nunavut - Inuit in a tiny Nunavut community are hoping the whirling flocks of thousands of seabirds that have filled larders for centuries will fill their wallets through one of the world's rarest and most precious commodities — eiderdown.

After being shuttered for nearly a decade, Sanikiluaq's eider factory started buying eiderdown this month, sustainably collected by Inuit families from the tens of thousands of nests built by the birds nearby.

"It will be a big deal," said Darryl Dibblee, administrator for the hamlet on Flaherty Island in the southeast corner of Hudson Bay. "We've already had a fair influx of people selling us down."

While the community hopes for long-term sustainable jobs, it's also eyeing changes to the water the birds need. Hunters are tracking the shifting ice and sea conditions as hydro projects from Quebec pour vast and increasing amounts of fresh water into the ocean.

Eiderdown comes from eider ducks, large seabirds that nest in huge numbers in the Belcher Islands. The hen plucks the down from her breast to protect her nest and the eggs.

Collectors take down before the eggs have hatched and take care to leave half the fluff. The down goes to the factory, where it is cleaned and sterilized and sewn into parkas and duvets.

A single nest can produce about 70 grams of eiderdown, the warmest and most durable insulation in the world. That sounds like a lot, but average annual worldwide production of eiderdown — most of which now comes from Iceland — is estimated at four tonnes, or about what it would take to fill a cube van.

That explains the price.

Uncleaned down sells for about \$330 a kilogram. Finished duvets cost up to \$10,000.

Sanikiluaq plans to sell cleaned down to European manufacturers as well as parkas and duvets, sewn by local women, through the community-owned corporation Belcher Islands Designs.

A feasibility study suggests the plant will break even by the second year and produce almost \$200,000 in profit by the third. Dibblee said it'll provide up to 15 jobs.

"That's a big deal in a town of 850 people."

It's a business rooted in traditional skills and practices, said Joel Heath, a Canadian scientist who's been studying the ducks and their importance to local culture for years.

"How do they use their skills to come up with jobs that are meaningful to them? The eiderdown factory is a great example of that."

Heath has completed an award-winning documentary called "People of a Feather" about the relationship Sanikiluaq has with the ducks, which have long provided food and clothing. The film also traces changes to the environment the ducks depend on.

Vast hydro reservoirs in Quebec are storing freshwater that used to pour into the bay in spring and releasing it instead in the winter to generate power for southern cities. Heath has found a layer of freshwater 25 metres deep all along Hudson Bay's eastern coast.

Ice forms much earlier in the fall, because freshwater freezes more quickly. Large flocks of ducks can get trapped on shrinking pools of open water.

Heath has brought together people from five communities to monitor the changes in ice cover and animal use. Using technology provided by Google Maps, the monitors can share information in real time all along the coast.

That's not only useful for hunters, it's increasingly critical for anyone who wants to travel on the sea ice.

"Having long-term jobs for Inuit, working together to try and understand what's happening in Hudson Bay ... the idea is, in the long term, (southerners) don't need to be there," Heath said. "The communities have enough knowledge to run the programs themselves."

For now, Dibblee just wants to get the factory through its pilot year.

Buyers for the down are lining up, waiting to judge the quality. The down sterilizers and eight industrial sewing machines have been imported into the community.

He's confident that the down that insulates eider chicks will help the Inuit feather their own nests.

"I wasn't going to do this unless I knew, long term, it was going to be feasible."

Direct Link:

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/business/Fluffy+story+Arctic+hamlet+opens+eiderdown+factory+feather/11154768/story.html>

Monique Keiran: Colonial renaming obscured cultures

Monique Keiran / Times Colonist
June 21, 2015 12:50 AM

When University of Victoria anthropology and computer science students joined forces in 2011 with the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group out of Ladysmith and local elders to develop a video game, they were furthering the concept that names confer power and presence.

In the game, players embark on a virtual journey through Coast Salish landscapes, exploring uses of the land, historic place names and traditional knowledge through video, audio, maps and photographs. Based on an earlier board game developed by the treaty group, the game serves as a step toward reclaiming culture, history and presence in the region.

It followed two significant events in which First Nations cultural geography on the coast was reclaimed. In 2009, B.C.'s Queen Charlotte Islands were officially renamed Haida Gwaii as part of a historic reconciliation agreement between the province and the Haida Nation, and in 2010, the waters off the province's south coast became known officially as the Salish Sea.

Last year, the progression toward reclamation took another step. Local First Nations publicly proclaimed Pkols as the original name of Mount Douglas, a site of cultural significance. They held a ceremony on the mountain and commemorated the mountain's

deep roots in their history with a carved cedar sign near the summit. They have submitted a formal request to B.C.'s Geographic Names Office to have the old name reinstated.

They also announced plans to reclaim Mount Newton within their historical and cultural geography of place names. The mountain, or ?Au,welnew (place of refuge), is sacred as the site where the Saanich people escaped a great flood about 10,000 years ago.

Names are much more than mere labels. They signify culture and history. They indicate relationships and responsibilities between people and provide glimpses into long-held knowledge. They denote connections between people and places.

Benign or otherwise, renaming causes what existed before to be filtered through a new lens. It can obscure prior relationships, and even erase them.

This happened at places such as Halifax's Pier 21 and New York's Ellis Island, two major ports at which newcomers to Canada and the U.S. arrived in North America. A century ago, when newcomers arriving by ship from Europe registered with immigration officials, some emerged from the experience with names spelled differently than before. In some cases, they received entirely new names on their immigration documents, wiping out links to previous lives.

In another, more egregious example, the Canadian government replaced the names of its Inuit citizens with numbers. Today we all carry around multiple number-identities — social insurance numbers, personal health-care numbers, numerous personal-identification numbers and so on — but each of those numbers links to our names. During much of the 20th century, numbers served as both beginning and end of an Inuit person's official identity. The system denied these people their right to self-identify and to the heritage inherent within names.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which held its closing events early this month, heard accounts of how First Nations, Inuit and Métis children were separated from their families and forced to attend residential schools.

These children were often beaten for speaking their native languages, they were indoctrinated in new faiths and world views and they were given new names. Over decades, the identities of thousands of individuals were systematically reworked, and entire generations' sense of history, culture and belonging was erased.

Many early B.C. leaders contributed to the rubbing out of First Nations' presence on the land. Explorers, fur traders, gold hunters and government officials overwrote the cultural significance of locations with allusions instead to places in their own homelands, to people and events of European significance, or even to their colleagues, wives and friends.

Despite such colonial denial, versions of some original place names endured. On southern Vancouver Island, for example, places such as Quamichan (Kwa'mutsun), Cowichan

(Quwutsun), Saanich (Wsanec), Sooke (T'Sou-ke), and Nanaimo (Snuneymuxw) echo the pre-existing roots of Coast Salish histories and geographies, albeit twisted in pronunciation and spelling.

But as B.C.'s First Nations reclaim their languages, place names and lands, official names in the province will shift back to their eons-old networks of identity, histories, relationships and cultures.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/opinion/columnists/monique-keiran-colonial-renaming-obscured-cultures-1.1974739#sthash.9jiAxjgo.dpuf>

Spirit Ride 2016 aims to raise money for aboriginal fitness

Don Patterson, 61, is using his bike to raise money for aboriginal fitness programs

[CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 22, 2015 1:46 PM CT Last Updated: Jun 22, 2015 1:46 PM CT



Don Patterson, 61, is riding the Dempster Highway on the first part of a 7,000-kilometre journey that will take him from Inuvik to the southernmost part of Canada. (spiritride.ca)

If you're driving on the Dempster Highway, watch out for a cyclist and his support crew.



Don Patterson, right, poses with his nephew, Rob MacInnis, who's joining him for the ride. (spiritride.ca)

Don Patterson is riding from Inuvik, N.W.T., to Point Pelee, Ont., the southernmost point of the country — a distance of 7,000 kilometres — in order to raise money for aboriginal fitness programs across Canada.

"I came up with this idea because I wanted to increase awareness for the importance of physical activity for our aboriginal youth," Patterson told our CBC reporter in Inuvik. "This way I can pass through many aboriginal communities starting in Inuvik where you have both first nations and Inuvialuit population."

Patterson, 61, has raised \$5,000 so far.



The route goes from the northernmost to the southernmost point in Canada. (spiritride.ca)

Some of that money will be used for a youth fitness position in the N.W.T.'s Beaufort Delta region, based in Inuvik.

He's also working with Olympic skier Sharon Firth to get ski equipment donated to Fort McPherson and Inuvik schools.

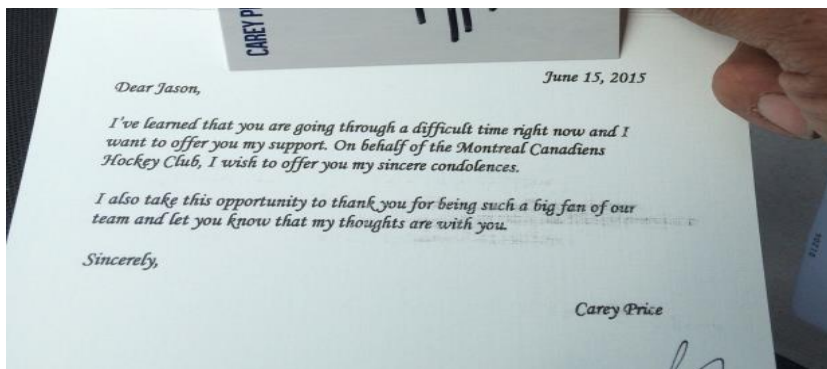
Donations are being accepted on his [website](http://www.spiritride.ca).

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/spirit-ride-2016-aims-to-raise-money-for-aboriginal-fitness-1.3122884>

Carey Price sends condolences to family of Cree hunters who died in fire

Montreal Canadiens goalie sends letter to Jason Coonishish in week before Father's Day

By Christopher Herodier, Betsy Longchap, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 23, 2015 3:38 PM CT
Last Updated: Jun 23, 2015 3:38 PM CT



A letter sent by Carey Price in the week leading up to Father's Day touches Jason Coonishish, father and brother of two men who died. (submitted by Jason Coonishish)

The father and brother of two of the Cree hunters who died in a cabin fire near Mistissini, Que. earlier this year says Carey Price of the Montreal Canadiens has touched many in the community with the simple act of sending his condolences.

In the week leading up to Father's Day Jason Coonishish received a letter from Price, the Canadiens' starting goaltender, which said he had learned Coonishish was going through a "difficult time" and that he wanted to offer his support and sincere condolences on behalf of the team.



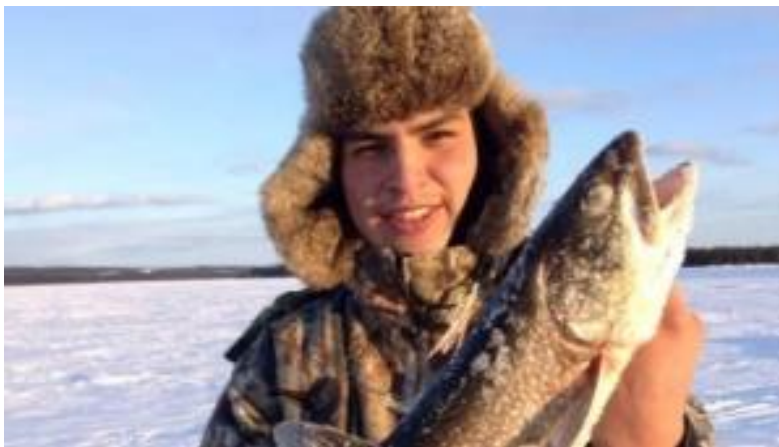
Montreal Canadiens goalie Carey Price grew up in Anahim Lake, B.C., and his mother is a former chief of Ulkatcho First Nation. (Paul Chiasson/Canadian Press/File)

"The letter he sent greatly touched me," said Coonishish.

Coonishish's son Chiiwetin, 22, and his brother Emmett, 39, were found dead on April 1 along with Charlie Gunner, 37, Kevin Loon, 33, and David Jimiken, 38, in a hunting cabin that had been destroyed by fire at Bussy Lake, about 300 kilometres north of Chibougamau.

"I guess he thought of my late son, who was a goalie when he played hockey and him (Carey) being a goalie in the NHL," he said.

Coonishish said he was surprised and touched that Price would take the time and reach out to other First Nations when he hears their stories.



Chiiwetin Coonishish, 22, was one of five Cree hunters killed in a cabin fire in northern Quebec.
(submitted by Jason Coonishish)

Price grew up in the First Nations community of Anahim Lake, in northern B.C., where his mother was a former chief of the Ulkatcho First Nation.

Coonishish says he, like many others who lost a loved one in the fire, are still grieving their loss. He says he worries most about the young people who lost their fathers in the fire.

"It's like a roller coaster. They all have ups and downs with their emotions," said Coonishish.

"There are days when we are in good spirits; the next day we feel like we are reliving the pain. We feel it in different ways."

He says he is happy to see the boys participate in community feasts and says they get a lot of support from other community members and friends, which helps a lot.

Coonishish says he hopes to bring Cole, Emmett's son, and Koby, the son of Charlie Gunner, to Montreal and to a Montreal Canadiens game to meet Price in person.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/carey-price-sends-condolences-to-family-of-cree-hunters-who-died-in-fire-1.3124692>

River Cree Resort and Casino breaking ground on new entertainment venue

First posted: Tuesday, June 23, 2015 02:59 PM MDT | Updated: Tuesday, June 23, 2015 09:48 PM MDT

The River Cree Resort and Casino is now breaking ground on its new entertainment venue.

"We are very excited to move forward and unveil our plans for the new venue," announced Robert Morin, CEO, River Cree Enterprises.

"This is a bigger and better facility than the previous version. We are proud to have moved quickly to plan this structure and begin construction."

The immediate closure of "The Venue" in March resulted in only a minor interruption to the entertainment scheduling, as the River Cree Resort and Casino was quick to respond to the closure.

"We are very proud to say that we didn't cancel a single show during the interruption," said Vik Mahajan, general manager, River Cree Resort and Casino. "We extend our sincerest gratitude to our community partners who worked with us to accommodate our shows and to our guests and patrons for their patience during the interruption."

The start date for construction is slated for July 7 with a completion date of September 1, 2015.

The new tent structure is 36 per cent larger than the previous venue at 28,000 square feet. It has a 2,500-2,600 person seating capacity, an increase of 700 seats. The structure is designed and coded to be a permanent building and will be attached to the main resort and casino.

The River Cree Resort and Casino is located just west of Edmonton on the Enoch Cree Nation.

Direct Link: <http://www.edmontonsun.com/2015/06/23/river-cree-resort-and-casino-breaking-ground-on-new-entertainment-venue>

Qikiqtani Inuit Association's Ilagiiktunut fund taking applications

Fund offers \$750k in funding to five Baffin communities closest to Mary River mine

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, June 24, 2015 - 2:21 pm



The Ilagiiktunut fund is available to the five communities closest to Baffinland's Mary River mine: Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Hall Beach, Igloolik and Pond Inlet.

If you're living in one of the five communities close to the Mary River iron mine, and you've got a project that needs funding — now is the time to apply for it.

The Qikiqtani Inuit Association, which administers the fund, is now accepting proposals for the Ilagiiktunut's fall 2015-16 funding cycle.

Various bodies, such as hamlet councils, committees, groups, and even individuals in Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Hall Beach, Igloolik and Pond Inlet may apply for funding for projects of their choosing.

The annual fund, [launched in July 2014](#), aims to offset the potential social, economic and cultural impacts on the communities surrounding the iron mine.

The Ilagiiktunut Fund is worth \$750,000 every year, with QIA and Baffinland Iron Mines Corp. each contributing \$375,000.

"The fund has been established because QIA and Inuit have recognized the need to make important improvements in community capacity, particularly in this period of growth and change brought on by natural resource developments within the Qikiqtaaluk region of Nunavut," the QIA said in June 24 release.

"The Ilagiiktunut Fund is one of the tools that we will use to enable such advances within communities impacted by the Mary River project."

The fund lasts until 2019-20. If all the money isn't spent in one given year, the remainder may carry over into the next year.

QIA and Baffinland will then decide whether to continue the fund for a further three years after 2020.

Applications can read more about funding guidelines [here](#).

Proposals can be submitted by e-mail at ilagiiktunut@qia.ca or in person to a QIA community liaison officer.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674qikiqtanis_ilagiiktunut_fund_taking_applications/

Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

Advocate and Elder: Josh Kakakeway's quest for a better future

Lynne Bell / Carlyle Observer
June 19, 2015 01:28 AM



Aboriginal court worker Josh Kakakeway has helped both First Nations and non-First Nations people navigate the criminal court system in southeast Saskatchewan for six years. Kakakeway speaks Cree,

English, Saulteaux and “some French,” adding, “Communication is the most important thing. Part of a court worker's job is to make people feel at ease, to try and comfort them and some times, a little humour helps, too. In an intimidating situation, communication can be uncomfortable; but communication is the best thing.” Photo: Lynne Bell

Aboriginal court worker and First Nations Elder Josh Kakakeway has transformed his hard-won life experience into a profound sense of empathy, as he helps people in southeast Saskatchewan navigate their way through the criminal court system; with the intention of guiding them towards a better future.

For the past six years, Kakakeway-a Level II Courtworker-has helped both First Nations and non-First Nations people make their way through the criminal court system in Carlyle, Estevan and Weyburn. His specialized training has prepared him for legal scenarios as varied as the people he serves, but Kakakeway says that his mandate is simple: “I want to try and help out as much as I can.”

“I want to do my best for everyone in court. It can be a very intimidating experience; but I really put a lot of my focus on the children. I want to see them have great futures and I want to help them turn their lives around towards a better way. I try to give good advice-like a parent.”

Kakakeway's services are free of charge, as he is employed by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice. The first step for anyone needing his assistance is to call or contact him to set up an appointment.

“I'll take some information over the phone from them-their charges, their birthdate, other information,” he says. “Then the next step is to figure out how I can help you.”

Kakakeway says part of his job “is to take a load off of the legal aid system, which is overwhelmed with clients.”

“I talk to clients and see what they want to do. There are sometimes options available they might not know about.”

“If it's a traffic case, I can plead out your case for you. You might want to pay the fine or you might choose to work it off with the Fine Options program.”

“With other charges, a lot of times, we use the Alternative Measures program, for people under the age of 18. They sit at a table with a mediator, both the victim and the offender, where they work to come up with an agreement that is suitable for each of them.”

“If it works like it should, the offender won't come out with a criminal record, but it's not an easy program. It's a powerful program. The offender has to sincerely acknowledge their wrongdoing by making amends, writing a letter of apology...They are

really accepting the responsibility of the charge(es) they receive and they really have to acknowledge their wrongdoing.”

“But I've never had anyone come back to me after doing Alternative Measures.”

Last year, Kakakeway handled “over 1,000 cases” and has a wealth of knowledge about making it through an unfamiliar and often -to the uninitiated-intimidating system.

“A lot of clients we refer to Legal Aid. But a lot of people have money-they work-but they're on the border of not quite qualifying for Legal Aid. What they might not know is that if they appear in court and are denied Legal Aid twice, then they are able to get a court-appointed lawyer.”

As an experienced Level II courtworker, Kakakeway has received specialized training (including courtroom protocol and language) and re-certifies every year, but stresses that his services do not take the place of a lawyer.

“As part of our ongoing training, we are informed of any new changes to the law; and if there are any new precedent-setting cases,” says Kakakeway. “But one of the most important things we do is make sure that the information we receive from our clients is straight and honest. As advocates, we're insured in case someone commits perjury.”

“We can only help you as much as you are honest with us,” he adds. “Communication is the most important thing. Part of a courtworker's job is to make people feel at ease, to try and comfort them and sometimes a little humour helps, too. In an intimidating situation, communication can be uncomfortable; but communication is the best thing.”

“Sometimes I don't get all the information,” adds Kakakeway. “I'll do what I need to do for you; but I'm not a lawyer. Some information you must give to your lawyer.”

“When you're young, it can be really intimidating stepping into the courtroom, especially if you don't know the system. For older (First Nations) people, language can be an issue and I can help them out because I speak Cree and Saulteux.”

As an Aboriginal court worker, Kakakeway keeps the court informed concerning other legal issues as they pertain to First Nations people.

“Locally, there are things like hunting charges and also bylaws that are put through by the chief and council that the court might not be aware of. I also let the court know if they're infringing on a treaty right.

“Like any advocate, we let the court know about our clients' history. I know a lot of people's background here; and a lot of people here have a residential school background. That's something I would inform the court about.”

For the first part of his childhood, Kakakeway was raised on White Bear First Nations by his grandparents, “until I was adopted and shipped off to P.A. (Prince Albert), where I stayed with a non-First Nations couple of Ukrainian ancestry.”

“I went through junior high in P.A.,” he says. “That’s where I learned to speak Cree. I didn’t learn it in school, because they didn’t teach it in schools back then, but there were a lot of Cree-speaking people in P.A. and I learned (Cree) from them.”

“There were also a lot of First Nations members in the penitentiary there. I played with city teams that played ball and hockey against the prisoners’ teams, and some of them were my family members.”

After completing school in Prince Albert, Kakakeway returned to White Bear. “After losing my grandparents, my aunts took me in, but I was really starting over.”

“With my green eyes and light complexion, I’ve always been a stranger. I understand the feeling of not knowing who you are or where you belong. That’s why I really put a lot of my focus on the children. I really want to see them have great futures.”

In addition to helping First Nations youth who find themselves in legal trouble, Kakakeway makes it a personal priority to do his best for all of White Bear’s children and youth- as an Elder in the community and as a culture and Cree language teacher at White Bear Education Complex.

At age 60, Kakakeway is considered a young Elder. “Some of the things an Elder does is go to funerals, to comfort people in a cultural way, to attend gatherings and to go to Elders’ gatherings. But it’s less about what you do and more about who you are and what you give to your community.”

“You really just become an Elder. You know who you are, you know your culture, you know your ceremonies. You get to that place in life where you fulfill a more responsible role. You think a little differently than you did when you were younger. You think a little differently about the future and the past-and you try and help out as much as you can.”

“I love my culture,” he says. “I teach culture and Cree at the school, and I really love children, too.”

“A lot of them come and see me and I tell them the stories my grandparents told me,” says Kakakeway. “I love telling those and some of my favourites are creation stories-and how things are all interconnected.”

“It’s a good feeling and I feel like they’re all my children at the school,” adding that two of his children will graduate from WBEC this year.

Married for 29 years to his wife Madeline, the Kakakeways speak Cree at home, and are the parents of nine children (one son is deceased) and the grandparents “of many.”

“My wife and I both talk Cree,” he says. “I can't express the feeling I get when a child knows the language and understands what you're talking about when you speak Cree. It's so satisfying to see the little children gain an understanding of their language and culture.”

Kakakeway says that although his jobs vary, they are all a part of what makes up his singular calling.

“Everybody has a purpose and my purpose is to help people. If you can learn from your mistakes; it will help your future. I learned from mine and my mistakes in the past made me a great teacher today.”

To make an appointment with Josh Kakakeway, call (306)-577-4553.

- See more at: <http://www.carlyleobserver.com/news/local-news/advocate-and-elder-josh-kakakeway-s-quest-for-a-better-future-1.1971328#sthash.qLEufPGu.dpuf>

Are bail conditions overused in Nunavut?

Are bail conditions 'an unjust and unnecessary restriction on the liberty of the individual?'

By Kieran Oudshoorn, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 20, 2015 3:03 AM CT Last Updated: Jun 22, 2015 6:56 AM CT

Innocent until proven guilty: it's the idea that punishment should follow conviction and it's one of the fundamental principles of justice. It's a principle that often gets muddled when it comes to bail conditions.

Bail conditions — such as house arrest orders, curfews, no-go zones, prohibitions on drugs and alcohol and no-contact orders — are often placed on accused offenders who are released while awaiting trial.

James Morton, who works as a defence lawyer in Nunavut, says sometimes bail conditions are necessary.

"Bail conditions are intended to make sure that the individual doesn't cause any harm to the community coming up to the trial," he says. "It's not intended as a punishment; it's intended to protect the community."

But Morton also says he sees cases where conditions overreach, such as no-alcohol orders, which he says are commonly imposed on the accused, even when alcohol was not part of the underlying offence.

"An arbitrary bail condition, say banning the consumption of alcohol when alcohol is not involved, really is an unjust and unnecessary restriction on the liberty of the individual," Morton says.

Criminalizing addictions?

In 2014, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association condemned the use of remand — the use of pre-trial detention for accused offenders — in a report titled *Set Up to Fail, Bail and the Revolving Door of Pre-trial Detention*.

The report also raised concerns about the overuse of bail conditions, pointing out that "failing to comply with a bail condition is a criminal offence, even if the underlying behaviour is not otherwise a crime."

The report made special note of conditions that restrict the use of drugs or alcohol for people who are addicted, saying that such conditions effectively criminalize a medical problem.

Barry McLaren, a senior Crown prosecutor in Nunavut, says that violent offences, often the result of alcohol, make up the vast majority of criminal cases in the territory.

He says the Crown's focus is on protecting victims, not dealing with the accused's medical conditions.

"A medical condition - a result of which people get beat up, hurt, injured, sexually assaulted, and property is damaged," he says. "[Bail conditions are] not an attempt necessarily to address the condition, it's an attempt to avoid those factors."

McLaren says the purpose of bail conditions is set out in the Criminal Code.

"It's very clear that the concerns are [the accused] coming to court, re-offending, the protection of the public against further offending and, ... the general perception of justice."

Not the Inuit way

Some Inuit in Nunavut's smaller communities say that no-contact orders, designed to keep an accused away from a victim or witness, are also a problem.

"In Inuit way, it's no fair at all," says Asena Kaerner, a community justice outreach worker in Hall Beach, Nunavut. "We are falling apart as a relative. If we can't talk to each other, our problems will never go away."

Kaerner says the problem lies with judges not personally knowing the people they are judging.

Nery Awa is currently incarcerated at Makigiavik, Iqaluit's new minimum security correctional facility.

He's been convicted more than 50 times in the last 30 years. By his estimation, at least half of those convictions were for breach of conditions, both bail and probation. He says having a longer rap sheet means different treatment from the courts.

"When you go to court, the judge usually sees your criminal past and what not, and she takes it from there, and sentences you according to that past."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/are-bail-conditions-overused-in-nunavut-1.3120259>

Aboriginal women get controversial new online tool to help fight violence

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt announces funding for new mobile app

By Connie Walker, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 22, 2015 11:39 AM ET Last Updated: Jun 22, 2015 5:12 PM ET



New app aimed at violence prevention in aboriginal communities also includes articles on cultural appropriation and bullying. ([a4w.ca](#))

Aboriginal Affairs minister Bernard Valcourt is being accused of victim blaming after announcing funding for a new online anti-violence campaign, aimed at aboriginal women and girls.

A mobile app, called A4W Live, was launched on Saturday. It's part of a national initiative called Action for Women, which focuses on violence prevention among indigenous youth, including information and articles on dating, celebrities, bullying and identifying domestic abuse.

The federal government pledged \$500,000 to fund the campaign and in a letter to Northwest Territories Premier Bob McLeod, Valcourt invited provincial and territorial jurisdictions to match the remaining \$500,000 cost of the project.

Valcourt wrote the mobile app will provide "information, tools and support that aboriginal women and girls need to make informed choices, whether they are confronting violence, or seeking information regarding its prevention."

Dawn Harvard, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, said creation of the app suggests victims are to blame.

"I actually find that language offensive that it's putting it once again back on the victims that the violence that they find themselves in — the violence that's inflicted on them — is somehow a result of a choice on their part, or more specifically a poor choice on their part," Harvard said.

"I know none of our young girls are growing up making a choice to be homeless, making a choice to be living in poverty. That is something that happens because of a lack of choice."

'Action for Women'

The mobile app aims to become "a digital community to end violence against indigenous women and girls." The site includes information and articles on health, sex, violence and addiction.



Tanya Tagaq is one of the indigenous celebrities featured on the new Action for Women website. (a4w.ca)

It also includes profiles of aboriginal celebrities including Inuit singer Tanya Tagaq and quizzes like, "Is my relationship healthy?" and "7 signs your drinking has become a problem."

Action For Women was created by the National Association of Friendship centres, a non-profit community centre and aboriginal program/service delivery organization. Along with the mobile platform, the campaign will also include programs aimed at indigenous men and boys, which will provide "solutions for men to stop violence."

Harvard said strategies that only focus on creating awareness or violence prevention will not address the bigger issue.

"While apps that create public awareness are great ... it doesn't address the root causes that are creating the situations of vulnerability, that are creating the poverty, that are creating the lack of opportunity."

RCMP report points to family violence

On Friday, [RCMP released a report](#) that found aboriginal women are three to four times more likely to be killed or go missing than non-aboriginal women. The report found that like female homicides in the general population, most aboriginal women are killed by men they know.

In 2013 and 2014, 32 aboriginal women were killed and 11 more went missing. However, those statistics do not include other cases that occurred outside RCMP jurisdiction.

The Mounties said those statistics were consistent with the rates of deaths and disappearances of aboriginal women in the last decade.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/aboriginal-women-get-controversial-new-online-tool-to-help-fight-violence-1.3121369>

Aboriginal Education & Youth

B.C. to devote one teacher professional day to aboriginal education

THE CANADIAN PRESS June 19, 2015



Education Minister Peter Fassbender says teachers in British Columbia will devote one of their six professional development days next year to aboriginal education.

Teachers in British Columbia will devote one of their professional development days next year to aboriginal education, the education minister said Friday.

The change coincides with government plans to introduce school curriculum changes that focus on First Nations culture and history, including the discriminatory residential school system.

Education Minister Peter Fassbender said it marks the first time aboriginal education is the sole focus of a professional development day where teachers gather for day-long conferences without their students in class.

B.C. teachers have six annual professional development days as part of their collective agreement, and the government is able to decide the development topic for one of those days. The government has chosen to focus past professional development days on anti-bullying initiatives.

B.C. will introduce education curriculum changes next year that will see students learn about aboriginal culture and history.

Students as young as 10 will soon be taught that past government policies towards Aboriginal Peoples resulted in the crushing legacy of Canada's residential-school system.

Starting in Grade 5, students will learn about residential schools and other racist government programs, such as the Chinese Head Tax, as part of a new kindergarten-to-Grade-12 education curriculum.

The recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission report into Canada's residential school experience recommended the creation and funding of aboriginal-education legislation.

After six years of hearings, the report concluded Canada's residential-school system was a form of cultural genocide.

Fassbender said in a statement B.C. is committed to improving education outcomes for aboriginal students and promoting greater understanding, empathy and respect for

aboriginal history and culture among students and their families through the revised curriculum.

He signed a protocol agreement Friday with First Nations educators that aims to guide collaboration efforts on aboriginal education.

There are about 66,000 aboriginal students in B.C.'s public and independent schools, comprising about 10.5 per cent of the total student population.

A joint report from the B.C. provincial health officer and children's representative released Thursday found that graduation rates among B.C. aboriginal students are rising but there are still too many students leaving school or not achieving at school.

The report also found aboriginal children make up eight per cent of the children and youth in B.C., but 50 per cent of the more than 8,000 children in government care.

That number is expected to rise to 60 per cent within the next five years, said children and youth representative Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond.

The report found that 60 per cent of youth in government care do not graduate from high school.

"The education system for many aboriginal children and youth in B.C. is a broken system," Turpel-Lafond said. "We are seeing far too many aboriginal children in B.C. not in school."

Direct Link:

<http://www.theprovince.com/life/devote+teacher+professional+aboriginal+education/11151627/story.html>

Nîkânîw leadership program helping aboriginal youth take the plunge

'It just breaks our heart each year when we have to turn people who are interested away'

By John Robertson, Adrienne Lamb, Sam Martin, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 20, 2015 6:00 AM MT Last Updated: Jun 20, 2015 12:52 PM MT

Looking back, 25-year-old Lorie White admits she was kind of lost.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do. I had a lot of friends who had gotten into drugs, who had gotten into alcohol, so it would have been so easy for me to get into that as well."

But that all changed when she took the plunge at 15.

She signed up for a free aquatic-leadership program run by the City of Edmonton targeting aboriginal youth — a program called Nîkânîw, Cree for 'one who leads the way.'



Lorie White supervises the students in the Nîkânîw Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program. (John Robertson)

Participants spend one evening each week in the pool learning water safety, first aid and leadership skills.

They also cook, share a meal and learn traditional aboriginal teachings from local elders.

Before the program, White says she would "go to the pool, swim with my sisters and brothers and we would just play. I never actually thought of it as a way to exercise or as a job."

A decade later Lorie White is now a lifeguard, trainer and in charge of Nîkânîw — a program now expanding to a second pool, with double the number of participants, according to Michelle Brodie Cartier, supervisor with the City of Edmonton aquatic experiences and education.

The program currently accommodates 30 young people, but many others are added to a waiting list, she said.



Nîkânîw participants like Annika Keewatin spend an hour and a half in the pool training each week. (John Robertson)

"It just breaks our heart each year when we have to turn people who are interested away."

Beginning this fall, they'll take up to 60 applicants and be running at both the Clareview Community Recreation Centre and Jasper Place Fitness and Leisure Centre.

Aboriginal elder Francis Whiskeyjack remembers White as a bashful, quiet teenager trying to find her way.

He says he's proud of the leadership and commitment she is showing in pushing to expand the program — one of the reasons why Whiskeyjack helps with the program.



Local elders teach Nîkânîw participants traditional knowledge and values. (Courtesy: Brice Ferre)

"Basically, what I do there is give them inspirational talks. If need be to listen to problems, but mostly to ground people in rebuilding identity in who they are and where they've come from."

Whiskeyjack says having this leadership program in the swimming pool is a perfect fit because water is "one element that gives you the stamina, the energy, the strength, endurance; either by ingesting or swimming through it."

"It's very connected to mother earth."

Direct Link:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/n%C3%AEk%C3%A2n%C3%AEw-leadership-program-helping-aboriginal-youth-take-the-plunge-1.3120222>

Aboriginal students offered new bursaries

The Whig-Standard

Saturday, June 20, 2015 6:15:36 EDT PM



Aboriginal students have two new opportunities to help them pursue post-secondary education at St. Lawrence College.

In honour of June's National Aboriginal Month, The St. Lawrence College Foundation announced two new bursaries for Aboriginal students. Also honouring National Aboriginal Day, Sunday, the bursaries are called the Brown's First Nations Opportunity Award and The Patricia and Bernard Colfe Aboriginal First Generation Bursary.

"I have always found that a little bit of help can make a huge difference," Tim Colfe, who created The Patricia and Bernard Colfe Aboriginal First Generation Bursary in honour of his parents, said in a release.

"This new bursary supports Ontario Aboriginal students and recognizes my late mother's interest in aboriginal art, culture and history which she shared for more than 20 years working as a volunteer guide at the Museum of Man and the Canadian Museum of Civilization."

The Colfe bursary will be offered annually to a full-time Aboriginal student at any of the SLC campuses in Kingston, Cornwall, and Brockville.

The Brown's First Nations Opportunity Award will be presented to Aboriginal students at SLC whose parent and/or grandparent survived an Indian Residential School. A gift from James Brown, the bursary comes after the Truth and Reconciliation report was released on June 2 in Ottawa.

"The Aboriginal population faces many barriers to attaining post-secondary education," Mary Ann Lyons, coordinator of Aboriginal Services/Aboriginal Student Advisor at St. Lawrence College, said. "With this increase in bursary opportunities, hopefully more will take the step to furthering their education and achieving their goals."

SLC also has the Metis National Bursary award which was established in 2006. With it, SLC now provides \$65,000 in bursaries for Aboriginal students.

The bursaries will specifically be for prospective First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students.

Direct Link: <http://www.thewhig.com/2015/06/20/aboriginal-students-offered-new-bursaries>

Manitoba moves on TRC recommendations on Indigenous education

By Staff Metro, June 21, 2015 | 2:33 pm



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Derek Nepinak and Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger watch the live stream of the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report on the residential system at the University of Winnipeg June 2.

The Province of Manitoba is acting on recommendations made in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report with a new plan for Indigenous education in Manitoba classrooms.

In a release Sunday the province said it's working on a new First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework document that will "ensure all Manitoba students learn about the histories, cultures, traditional values, contemporary lifestyles and traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples" and include sections on the legacy of residential schools and the significance of treaties.

"With the release of the TRC's final report, it's time to acknowledge the truth about what happened in Canada's residential schools, educate students and move forward in a spirit of reconciliation, mutual understanding and respect," said Premier Selinger in the release. "Educating students about historical wrongs is a step toward mutual respect, reconciliation, and understanding how we as a society can move forward together."

The province said legislation introduced this fall will enshrine the new policy framework and include a requirement that it be reviewed and renewed every three years.

The release goes on to say the province plans to update current provincial curriculum to reflect Indigenous history and perspectives—including the ‘60s Scoop—and work with post-secondary institutions to develop a strategy for introducing more Indigenous content into bachelor of education courses to help make sure teachers are ready for the new policy framework.

Direct Link: <http://metronews.ca/news/winnipeg/1403390/manitoba-moves-on-trc-recommendations-on-indigenous-education/>

New funding for Métis students at Lakeland College

By [Simon Arseneau](#)

Monday, June 22, 2015 10:26:57 MDT AM



Lakeland College president and CEO Alice Wainwright-Stewart, Metis Nation of Alberta Provincial President Audrey Poitras, and Metis Nation of Alberta Region 2 President Karen Collins holding the cheque for a new funding agreement for Metis students at Lakeland College on Wednesday, June 17.

Lakeland College has signed an agreement to establish a special purpose fund for awards for Métis students.

The agreement was signed on Wednesday morning at the college, and will establish a fund of \$130,000 to provide bursaries and awards to be distributed each year in the form of two to four awards worth between \$2,500 and \$3,500 to students of Métis heritage.

The Métis Education Foundation provided the funds, which will help students who have to deal with student loans or have to work part-time jobs in order to cover the cost of their education.

“Maybe they will have one part-time job (instead), and if they’re lucky they won’t have to have their debts so high because college education today is an expensive investment, although it is an investment into their future,” said Lakeland College president and CEO Alice Wainwright-Stewart.

Also present for the signing of the agreement were Darrel Howel, chair of the Lakeland College board of governors; Audrey Poitras, provincial president of the Métis Nation of Alberta; and Karen Collins, provincial president of the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 2.

To qualify for the awards, students must be of Métis heritage, have to be Canadian citizens, and have a certain grade point average.

“There are some forms to fill out, but it’s not a hard process to access,” Poitras said. “What we want to do is, never before have our students had opportunities other than getting student loans that they had to pay back and things like that, so we’re not making it difficult for them. It’s a process that is negotiated between the college and the Rupertsland Institute to make sure that it will meet the requirement of all the students without extra work.”

The Rupertsland Institute was created in 2010 and belongs to the Métis Nation of Alberta. It is independently run and focuses on providing education and employment to the Métis people. This agreement is its first with Lakeland College and Poitras hopes it won’t be the last.

“The partnership is not just a one-day partnership and gone, we expect to continue having meetings and talk about what they need, what we need, how we both can support it to continue bettering the agreement we have,” she said.

The agreement will go into effect for the 2015-16 academic year and is expected to last for the next 15 years.

Wainwright-Stewart says it is difficult to establish exactly how many students attend Lakeland College because not all of them self-declared. Of the 1,900 students that were at the college last year 130 of those were self-declared and studied in various fields such as firefighting, Ag business, environmental sciences, and practical nurse programming.

“We have a history with our First Nations people,” Wainwright-Stewart said. “We’ve been around for 102 years, so we’ve had opportunities to work with many different nationalities, and so as I said today we have about 22 (per cent) Métis students that attended Lakeland last year, and we welcome our students, we welcome Métis nation and hopefully we’ll have a wonderful partnership going forward with more opportunities. I

think when students get an opportunity to see that there's a financial support available, maybe we'll even have more opportunities in the future."

Direct Link: <http://www.meridianbooster.com/2015/06/22/new-funding-for-metis-students-at-lakeland-college>

First Nations law student gets OK to wear regalia to call to bar in Ontario

Christina Gray feels 'vindicated' that law society reconsidered refusal of her request

By Duncan McCue, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 22, 2015 9:08 PM ET Last Updated: Jun 24, 2015 10:29 AM ET



Gray is mixed Tsimshian/Dene/Metis heritage and has been wrangling with the Law Society of Upper Canada since April, after she asked to wear her button blanket to her call ceremony. (Supplied)

When Christina Gray is called to the bar in Ontario on Tuesday, she'll be the only law student wearing a woolen red-and-black button blanket and cedar hat — instead of black barristers' robes which is the common practice for soon-to-be lawyers.

In fact, she'll be the first candidate ever in Ontario to wear First Nations regalia.

"I hope it sends a clear message to other First Nations students: you don't have to feel disconnected from your community and who you are," says Gray.

Gray is mixed Tsimshian/Dene/Metis heritage and has been wrangling with the Law Society of Upper Canada since April, after she asked to wear her button blanket to her call ceremony.

The Law Society rejected her request, saying the blanket could only be worn after the ceremony, as it interfered with a longstanding tradition of wearing barristers' robes.

"Candidates are traditionally required to wear robes because the ceremony is officially a session of the court," says Susan Tonkin of the Law Society of Upper Canada. "It mirrors what barristers wear in court, and the idea is to make everyone equal, so nobody stands out."

In recent years, the Law Society has allowed cultural items — such as hijabs, turbans, head scarves and eagle feathers — to be worn along with the robes at the ceremony.

The Law Society invited Gray to speak to their decision if she had questions, but Gray was disappointed by the initial response.

"Aboriginal Peoples have been left out of the conversation in creating the laws of Canada," says Gray.

"When they said I had to wear the barristers' robes, I felt that it was an impediment to recognizing Aboriginal Peoples and our laws."

Blanket represents laws



Christina Gray will be the first candidate ever in Ontario to wear First Nations regalia when she receives her call to the bar on Tuesday. (Supplied)

Gray, 32, is from the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation in northwestern British Columbia, where button blankets are an important part of the potlatch system. During feasts, chiefs and matriarchs typically wear a button blanket, vest or tunic, and a cedar hat or headdress.

"When we have our feast and wear the blanket, it represents to everyone at the feast where we come from and which family, clan, house, and tribe we're part of."

Gray is a member of the Gispewada (Killer Whale) clan. Her hand-sewn blanket is adorned with a killer whale, and was designed by her cousin. She says the blanket represents ayaawx, which are Tsimshian traditional laws, precedents and ways of being.

In a letter to the Law Society, she quoted academics Doreen Jensen and Polly Sargent who argue the button blanket is a "coded legal document" which "proclaims heredity rights, obligations and powers."

Gray graduated from law school at the University of British Columbia in 2013. She says she felt fully supported in wearing her blanket to the convocation ceremony.

Law society changes

After the initial rejection from the Law Society, Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto, her principal advisor Emily Hill and the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation made submissions on Gray's behalf.

"Surely there must be space in our legal pluralistic society, and specifically within the realm of our profession, to celebrate and embrace indigenous legal traditions within those traditions of common law," wrote Christa Big Canoe and Johnathan Rudin of Aboriginal Legal Services Society of Toronto in a letter to the Law Society.

After consideration, the Law Society agreed to honour Gray's request to wear the button blanket, saying it appreciates the dialogue.

"We learned about the importance of the regalia, and its relevance to legal and cultural traditions," says Tonkin. "It reflects our commitment to diversity and reconciliation."

Gray felt "vindicated" after the decision.

"It sends a very strong message to the profession that legal pluralism is the world that we live in now."

Gray's mother and aunt will attend the ceremony on Tuesday. After successfully completing her articles last fall, and her bar exams this spring, Gray hopes to practice in the area of aboriginal law.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/first-nations-law-student-gets-ok-to-wear-regalia-to-call-to-bar-in-ontario-1.3123665>

Nunavik looks at starting own Nunavut Sivuniksavut-type program

Kativik School Board hiring consultant to set up post-secondary program in Montreal

By Jane Sponagle, Shaun Malley, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 23, 2015 1:33 PM CT Last Updated: Jun 23, 2015 1:33 PM CT



Student pal around during an orientation week at Nunavut Sivuniksavut in Ottawa. In its 30-year history, the program has educated young Inuit from Nunavut about their history and culture. Inuit in northern Quebec are a step closer to starting their own, similar program in Montreal. (Nunavut Sivuniksavut)

Inuit in northern Quebec are a step closer to starting their own post-secondary program similar to the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program in Ottawa.

In partnership with Algonquin College, Nunavut Sivuniksavut prepares young Inuit for post-secondary education and career opportunities created by land claims agreements. The program recently began accepting applications from Inuit outside Nunavut.

The Kativik School Board, which oversees education for Inuit in Nunavik, posted a job Monday for an education consultant to help develop a curriculum, admissions criteria and find classroom space for a Nunavik Sivuniksavut program.

Jason Annahatak, the school board's director of post-secondary student services, said the project is a joint effort by the school board, the Kativik Regional Government and Makivik Corporation.

Annahatak said John Abbott College in Montreal has been a great partner and will help the education consultant get started. John Abbott is a popular post-secondary school for many Nunavik Inuit already, he said. Courses offered at Nunavik Sivuniksavut would be similar to courses at the Nunavut program in Ottawa, said Annahatak.

"We also want to prepare our students for college. So English writing, Inuit history, the history of Inuit land claims — a Nunavik version of it, teaching the James Bay Northern Quebec agreement and all the historical implications that are associated before and after that," said Annahatak.

"We have ambitious plans and a lot of that will be contingent on how fast that education consultant does their work, and finds the right funding partners and resources and teachers."

Annahatak said a pilot project could be ready by 2016. He said the plan would be to start with a small class of eight to 10 students, similar to how Nunavut Sivuniksavut started 30 years ago.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavik-looks-at-starting-own-nunavut-sivuniksavut-type-program-1.3124684>

UBC business school develops First Nations curriculum

‘It just makes good business sense’ for Sauder School of Business, associate dean says

By Matthew Robinson, Vancouver Sun June 24, 2015



Amie Wolf inside UBC's Sauder Business School. Wolf, a Metis woman from Saskatchewan, was recently hired by Sauder Business School to develop far-reaching First Nations curriculum that will be integrated throughout the first year teachings of all its business students.

VANCOUVER — A major culture shift is afoot at the University of B.C.'s Sauder School of Business.

Amie Wolf, an aboriginal woman from Fort Saskatchewan, Alta., is one of the most recent hires at Sauder, brought on to help develop an ambitious and far-reaching First Nations curriculum that will be embedded into the learning of every student accepted into the business school.

Wolf's task is straightforward — sensitize students to the legacy of residential schools in B.C., the economic barriers facing some First Nations, and the way to do business with them, practically and respectfully.

But speak to Wolf about her work and its importance and complexity soon becomes evident.

“It's one thing on National Aboriginal Day to celebrate the grass dance and the hoop dance and the dress and the bannock. No one would disagree that we welcome that,” said Wolf in a recent interview.

But business is “where the rubber hits the road,” said Wolf, who sees inspiring her students to care as a step toward taking down the systemic and persistent economic marginalization of Aboriginal people.

“To actually take a step forward, as a business student, to address those wrongs, that is awesome. And that means business. That's putting your money where your mouth is.”

Wolf's work on a First Nations curriculum is part of a recent refocus on values, ethics and social responsibility at Sauder, said Darren Dahl, a senior associate dean at the school.

He said not only is there a “moral obligation” for Sauder to help build bridges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and cultures, “it just makes good business sense.”

“If students are graduating with no awareness of these issues and business concepts that surround First Nations, that's a fail,” Dahl said.

“It's come to a time point that this has become a salient issue and part of that is the evolution of how First Nations are being acknowledged in the broader society,” he said. “Were our students well-versed in these issues 10 years ago? Probably not at all.”

Given that joint ventures with First Nations are increasingly appearing across the provincial landscape, the school has a better sense than it did even a decade ago of what has worked and what has failed, making it easier to develop a useful curriculum, Dahl said.

Should Sauder eventually see some of its graduates working with First Nations as a career focus, that would be a big victory, he said. So too would be seeing more Aboriginal students and faculty attracted to the business school, he added.

Wolf's arrival at Sauder was somewhat fortuitous. When her job teaching adult basic education in Vancouver was axed as a result of provincial funding cuts, she approached the school with a portfolio. Dahl invited her to teach a guest lecture on First Nations business relations last fall, then invited her to design a course on First Nation/private sector joint-venture partnerships. The first round of eight students finished taking that course this spring.

The work is deeply personal for Wolf. When speaking of it she drew on her own past to give insight into part of the reason why the economic marginalization of First Nations has persisted.

"I was adopted into a white family and I was given just one (warning) and that was my adopted dad saying to me: 'This is your cultural background — you're First Nations. But you don't tell anyone about it, you don't talk about it and ... if you do mention it, no one is going to want to hire you for a job and no one is going to want to be your friend.' To me, that was the extent of my education."

Later, Wolf learned that members of her family had hidden from her the fact that she had a Cree sister.

That kind of social segregation and stigma doesn't just go away in a day, Wolf said.

"I'm deeply committed to desegregation," she said. "Until we're equal, we will always be at the mercy of people who have compassion or understanding or who are willing to do it differently. But (it is not) until we have our own economic base that we'll be free."

Wolf relies on longhouse protocols during class and facilitates in a sharing circle format. Instead of receiving a lecture and information in a top-down fashion, students read up on topics before class and take turns speaking about them.

It's about "thawing the colonial experience of education," she said.

Wolf's curriculum and the school's approach has put Sauder out in front of a recent call by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for educators to integrate teachings about First Nations perspectives and experiences into broader curricula.

While Dahl said that the changes being made at Sauder are unlikely to be drastic, the fact that a business school is teaching this subject at all may come as a surprise. First Nations curricula have been taught in law and arts faculties for years, but it's something fairly new to business school, Dahl said.

Katriona MacDonald, a senior adviser to the dean and CAO at Sauder, said she has heard from students that they'd been wanting more education in this area.

“If you do not emerge from a business program with some ability to engage comfortably in some way with these topics, then we have failed as a business school. That’s just how we see it,” she said.

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/business+school+develops+First+Nations+curriculum/11163528/story.html#ixzz3e5QTNV8r>

Aboriginal Health

Powerview-Pine Falls Health Centre to get \$10-million makeover



The province says Parkwest Projects Inc. will lead construction at the Powerview-Pine Falls Health Centre that will include new primary care and traditional healing centres.

The Canadian Press

Published Monday, June 22, 2015 1:44PM CST

Last Updated Monday, June 22, 2015 1:49PM CST

The Manitoba government has awarded the tender for a 10-million dollar redevelopment at a health complex in a town northeast of Winnipeg.

The province says Parkwest Projects Inc. will lead construction at the Powerview-Pine Falls Health Centre that will include new primary care and traditional healing centres.

Health Minister Sharon Blady says the changes to the facility -- which sits on the traditional territory of Sagkeeng First Nation -- will bring more culturally appropriate health-care services to families in the town as well as surrounding First Nations and Metis communities.

The redevelopment will provide space for traditional healers and elders, an additional nurse practitioner, a First Nation and Metis outreach liaison, a medical lab assistant and spaces for maintenance, food services and housekeeping.

Direct Link: <http://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/powerview-pine-falls-health-centre-to-get-10-million-makeover-1.2434834>

Improving Aboriginal care



Brenda Mason, Anishinabe cultural and spiritual services worker with St. Joseph's Care Group and member of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre Aboriginal Advisory Committee, speaks on Monday during an event to mark National Aboriginal Day at the hospital.

Posted: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 10:30 am

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Over the past five years, the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre has taken steps to improve health care for Aboriginals.

Officials with the hospital as well as representatives from the federal department of Canadian Heritage attended a ceremony in Thunder Bay that looked back at the strides made to improve health care for Aboriginal Peoples.

This includes hiring an Aboriginal engagement lead, giving Aboriginal patient navigators in child and adolescent mental health, and creating the Centre for Complex Diabetes Care.

The hospital has also provided numerous different cultural sensitivity training opportunities for staff.

“Our mission at Canadian Heritage is to promote an environment in which all Canadians take full advantage of dynamic cultural experiences, celebrating our history and heritage, and participating in building creative communities,” said Steve Khan, program officer with the department of Canadian Heritage, in a news release.

“Today’s celebration is a perfect example of that mission in action.”

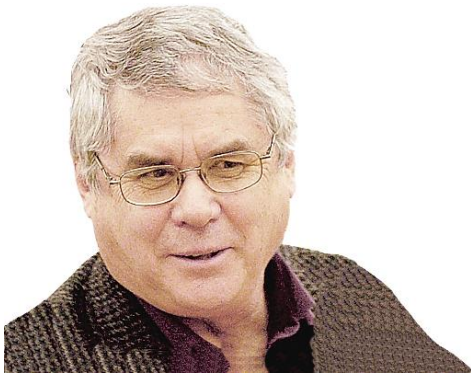
The regional hospital is also working to make the grounds a more welcoming environment by displaying more Aboriginal artwork and stories throughout the facility.

Direct Link: http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/improving-aboriginal-care/article_9891a21e-1a7d-11e5-bd77-2b8db0d8fc94.html

Aboriginal History

Cuthand: First Nations' contributions key part of Canada

By Doug Cuthand, The Starphoenix June 19, 2015



This Aboriginal Day is also the 25th anniversary of Elijah Harper standing up in the Manitoba legislature to say "No" to the Meech Lake accord. It was a watershed event for Canada and the First Nations.

The Meech Lake Accord was reached between the premiers and the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney. It consisted of a series of constitutional amendments designed to accommodate Quebec and allow the province to ratify the Constitution Act of 1982.

First Nations leaders, who had been lobbying to have First Nations selfgovernment recognized as a third form of government in Canada, were ignored in the process. To be truly inclusive, the accord should have had our inherent right to self-government recognized, as well.

Ratification of the accord needed approval by each province. The deadline for provincial ratification was June 23, 1990. On June 12, Manitoba premier Gary Filmon introduced

the Meech Lake Accord to the provincial legislature. To have it ratified, the legislature had to bypass normal procedural requirements such as holding public hearings. This required unanimous consent from the assembly.

Harper was the former chief of the Red Sucker Lake First Nation and MLA for the constituency of Rupertsland. He was the first status Indian elected to the Manitoba legislature.

National chief Phil Fontaine of the Assembly of First Nations and others had advised Harper how to stall the accord's passage. Eight times between June 12 and June 21 he stood in the legislature, holding an eagle feather and refusing to grant unanimous consent.

It was the death of Meech Lake, and a historic moment for the First Nations.

Harper's action sent an important message to both governments and First Nations people. Never again would we be marginalized, and one of our people had the power to change the course of history.

Sunday is Aboriginal Day, but did you know that June is also Aboriginal History Month?

Parliament passed a unanimous motion in 2009 to make that declaration. During this month Canadians are supposed to reflect on the history and contributions of Canada's First Nations, Inuit and Métis people.

Canada has a settler culture, and the contribution of the first peoples tends to be suppressed and forgotten. For many Canadians, history began when European settlers first set foot on Canadian soil, even though

First Nations names were adopted. Names such as Quebec, Ontario, Mississauga, Saskatchewan, Winnipeg and so on are First Nations names.

When I was in school we learned that Canada's first farmer was a French settler, Louis Hebert. What I didn't learn was that for generations before that Mohawks had grown corn, squash and beans. They planted these crops together in a process known today as companion planting, which eliminated weeds. Later I learned that many crops grown around the world today were developed by indigenous farmers in the Americas.

Jesuit missionaries complained in their diaries about getting lost in Mohawk cornfields. Apparently they couldn't put two and two together.

We were regarded as lazy people with no understanding of commerce, forgetting that it was the indigenous people who formed the supply chain for the fur trade. The Hudson Bay Company occupied forts on the shore of Hudson's Bay for nearly a century, its agents refusing to travel inland. The local Indians had told them of wild beasts and monsters inland. Instead, the Indians purchased trade goods and traded them with other tribes in the interior. It was a good scam and lasted nearly a century.

In fact, the "explorers" used First Nations trade routes when they travelled inland, and were guided by First Nations people. They used our canoes in the summer, and dog teams and snowshoes in the winter. They adopted our technology in order to survive. They didn't discover a country; they were introduced to one.

First Nations are a sharing people. Our ancestors were prepared to trade with the newcomers and share the bounty of the land. For years we made treaties among different tribes. These treaties were regarded as sacred covenants, and treaty making with the Crown was approached in much the same manner.

For a while we maintained a positive economic relationship with the settlers. Our people sold horses to the newcomers, and many individuals were a well regarded source of good horses that were necessary for the settlers. Our people also began to farm and ranch to the point where they were in competition the settlers, who then determined that they were a threat.

This led to complaints to the government, and a clause was inserted into the Indian Act that stated First Nations farmers must get a permit from the Indian agent before they could sell their produce off-reserve. This led to the collapse of aboriginal agriculture.

First Nations culture, technology and governance were far more sophisticated than what's chronicled in history books. This month is your opportunity to look into our shared history. You'll find it anything but boring.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/Cuthand+First+Nations+contributions+part+Canada/11149717/story.html>

Twenty-five years since Oka: do we have the courage to recognize injustice and act?

By [Tzeporah Berman](#) in [Opinion](#) | June 22nd 2015



A Mohawk warrior confronts a soldier in Kanesatake on September 26, 1990, during the Oka crisis

Twenty-five years ago, I sat in the auditorium of the Royal Ontario Museum with tears streaming down my face as I listened to Ellen Gabriel of Kahnéssetake First Nations say: “Oka is not about a golf course. It is about children being torn away from their families and put in residential schools. It’s about our communities struggling for decades for basic rights, for self determination, for justice.”



Ellen Gabriel

That night, my view of the world, my view of the country I live in and my own history changed forever.

I would like to say that from that moment on all of my actions reflected this dawning awareness of injustice within our own country, of my own privilege and the need for deep reconciliation with Indigenous peoples that recognizes the importance of supporting the right to culture, language and land. They haven’t, and they don’t. Here is the thing about colonialism, privilege, and racism. It’s insidious, it’s built into unjust systems, and normalized. I’ve discovered over the years that it takes constant vigilance and work to truly face and begin to address injustice — it’s sticky like glue, and invisible when it dries.

Yesterday was National Aboriginal Day and I offer that now is a good time to reflect and challenge some of the pervasive assumptions and ideas that continue to uphold a system that is by its very nature unjust. It’s a good time collectively and individually to recognize that we need to change how we act, what and who we support, in order to see change happen. We need to have the courage to recognize when the path we are on is not the right path and try to set off in a new direction even if it holds unknowns and might be messy, or even expensive. The fact is, the path we are on is already, complicated, messy and expensive – and it’s not working.

Over the past several years, we have seen a proliferation of First Nations lawsuits over resource development in Canada. There are now dozens of lawsuits over mining, forestry, the Site C dam, the expansion of the oil sands, the Enbridge and Kinder Morgan pipelines. Despite the fact that First Nations communities in Canada have the highest unemployment rate, the highest suicide rates, some of the highest poverty rates and the

fact that many remote communities do not have reliable access to clean water and healthy food, across the country Nations are mustering the resources to go to court. They are saying no to multi-million or even billion dollar bribes and buy-outs.

Nations like the Lax Kw'alaams members who voted unanimously to reject a \$1-billion cash offer from Pacific NorthWest LNG, are turning down these bribes because of their connection to the land and their recognition of the environmental damage these projects present. We would do well to heed their concerns.

The idea that First Nations should have to go to court to enforce their Treaty rights, protect their homes, to reinforce their definition of free, prior and informed consent is an astonishing embarrassment and failure of our ability as a country to ensure reconciliation. The bottom line is free, prior and informed consent must be a shared definition or we are upholding a lie. These are complex issues but the longer we avoid the real conversations and our own government spends our money fighting First Nations in court, the more complicated they become.



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip on Burnaby Mountain during Kinder Morgan protest in November 2014. Photo by Mychaylo Prystupa

The Idle No More protests in the last couple of years were a shot across the bow. First Nations communities across the country feel the cumulative impacts of industrial projects like the oil sands and the impacts of climate change first and have fewer resources to address these issues. They are the frontline, and that frontline is standing up and saying enough is enough.

As a nation, we need to stop trying to 'problem-solve' individual resource 'skirmishes,' and stop thinking that public apologies, photo-ops and cheques are going to get us on the right path.

This month Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin and Justice Murray Sinclair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission referred to our historical treatment of Aboriginal peoples as an attempt to commit 'cultural genocide'.

A pathway for reconciliation has been laid out in the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Rights. When this was introduced in 2007, Canada was one of a handful of

countries that refused to support the Declaration. We reversed that position in 2012 but have yet to create a plan for adoption and implementation. This must be a priority for our nation.

After twenty-five years, this year I had the opportunity to hear Ellen Gabriel speak again. Sadly, on the anniversary of the Oka stand off Ellen is busy fighting against the Energy East pipeline being pushed through her traditional territory as she and many indigenous people are concerned about the expansion of the oil sands and the risks of oil spills and water contamination from the pipeline. I asked her one evening what her vision of the future was. She gave me a gentle and tired smile and then shifted my worldview again a quarter of century later:

“All we have ever wanted is peace. To live in peace and harmony with the land. What’s our vision of the future? Our vision of the future is that we will assimilate you.”

Direct Link: <http://www.nationalobserver.com/2015/06/22/opinion/twenty-five-years-oka-do-we-have-courage-recognize-injustice-and-act>

High Inuit suicide rates rooted in historical trauma: veteran Nunavut researcher

Nunavut, Greenland stats show painful social upheaval began in the 1970s

PETER VARGA, June 23, 2015 - 6:05 am



Jack Hicks, a former suicide-prevention advisor for Nunavut, describes research on the rise of Inuit suicide rates in the North at an international conference on suicide prevention held June 18 in Montreal. (PHOTO BY PETER VARGA)



Allison Crawford of the University of Toronto chairs a panel on historical trauma in indigenous societies at an international conference on suicide prevention, June 18 in Montreal, as researchers Amy Bombay of Dalhousie University and Gerald McKinley of Western University await questions. (PHOTO BY PETER VARGA)

Special to Nunatsiaq News

MONTREAL — As in Greenland, Nunavut’s alarming suicide rate among Inuit — now 10 times the Canadian national average — is the reverse of what historical records show for the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, says researcher Jack Hicks, a former suicide-prevention advisor for the territory.

As co-chair of a panel on historical trauma in indigenous societies at the International Association for Suicide Prevention’s 28th congress in Montreal, June 18, Hicks presented evidence that shows suicide rates among the Inuit of Nunavut began steadily growing towards their current record levels after about 1970.

His evidence lines up with a body of research that traces the causes of suicide in Nunavut to painful upheavals — or “historical trauma” — within Inuit society as it shifted from traditional hunting and gathering on the land to a wage-based economy during the past century.

Hicks’ research uncovered RCMP files from the early 20th century, which reported that only 25 Inuit took their own lives in the Northwest Territories during the 25-year period between 1920 and 1945.

“The police records align with [Inuit] oral histories,” Hicks said. “Suicides happened once in a great while.”

The turning point in the suicide record came around 1970, after upheavals brought on by “disruptions of Inuit society, as white people began to arrive,” Hicks said.

“The real shock came with the relocation into settled communities.”

Other shocks included the establishment of residential schools, which took children from their families, the introduction of police, the Canadian justice system, and the wage economy, which caused Inuit to lose their traditional lifestyle.

The aftershocks of these upheavals are still felt today, Hicks said, in the astonishing suicide rate that is more than 110 per 100,000 Nunavut Inuit this decade, up from just 10 per 100,000 Inuit in the early 1970s.

Unlike now, at the start of the 20th century, most of the deaths by suicide resulted from physical or psychological pain that in our times would “be relatively easily treated by a community health centre,” Hicks said.

Blindness, for example—or other ailments that could prevent Inuit from contributing to their families or cause them to become a burden—would compel them to take their own lives.

“If you were an Inuk on the land in 1920, and you suddenly became blind, that was huge,” Hicks said. “You were a huge drain on your family. You could no longer contribute.”

Suicide among able-bodied youth at that time was practically unheard of.

But this decade, young Inuit men and boys aged 15 to 24 are the greatest risk. Suicide rates for male youth in that age group are about 500 per 100,000, Hicks said.

Hicks pointed to a similar story in Greenland. Statistics there show suicides among young indigenous Greenlandic males, aged 15 to 29, also began to rise in the 1970s.

Males born in the 1950s, when “the Danish state set out to modernize Greenlanders to be proper Danes,” were the first to show elevated levels of death by suicide, he said.

Allison Crawford, director of the Northern Psychiatric Outreach Program with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, said the need to acknowledge historical trauma drove Nunavut health workers and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. to establish [Nunavut’s Suicide Prevention Strategy](#), which took effect in 2011.

“Historical trauma was a very important impetus for creating that strategy,” Crawford told *Nunatsiaq News*.

Hicks helped create the Nunavut strategy as an advisor for the territorial government.

“Among our conclusions was that understanding the trauma history of Nunavut—and how it’s being transmitted from generation to generation—is essential to trying to break its transmission,” he said.

“We put a strong focus on well-being of children, and the role of government.”

The Government of Nunavut launched the suicide prevention strategy in 2011.

But that strategy hasn't prompted any significant results. Nunavut's [worst year for suicides occurred in 2013](#), when 45 Inuit took their own lives.

Reversing the trend is a big challenge, Hicks admitted.

"Nunavut today has a whole host of social problems, and extremely tough living conditions for many families," he said.

Those tough conditions include housing shortages, food insecurity, lack of mental health services, and an education system that doesn't measure up to national standards.

"Nunavut has poor social determinants of mental health and weak mental health services," Hicks said.

"Unfortunately the Nunavut leadership—both the politicians and the very well-paid senior government officials—have not yet demonstrated the capacity to tackle what's been happening in Nunavut."

A nation-wide suicide prevention strategy would help, Crawford said.

"Canada is one of the few developed nations that does not have a national suicide prevention strategy," she said, adding the country "absolutely" needs one.

"There would be a clear commitment [including funding] from the federal level down, and there would be accountability," she said.

The Canadian government took a first step to creating a national strategy in December 2012, when it passed the Federal Framework for Suicide Prevention Act.

The government hasn't pushed any further to create a strategy since then.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674high_inuit_suicide_rates_rooted_in_historical_trauma_veteran_nunavut_r/

Aboriginal Identity & Representation

U of S launches certificate programs in indigenous languages

By Jennifer Jacoby-Smith, The StarPhoenix June 19, 2015

This fall, students at the University of Saskatchewan will be able to obtain a certificate in indigenous languages for the first time. The Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) and Department of Curriculum Studies have partnered to create the Indigenous Language Certificate. The two-year certificate, consisting of 10 courses and 30 credit units, was developed by Kevin Lewis.

"It is designed to immerse students in Cree language and Cree language instruction and pedagogy so that when they're done they can teach Cree language in the classroom," explains Michelle Prytula, Dean of the U of S College of Education. "This to me is the most innovative and valuable component of this program. If teachers are equipped with the language and pedagogy to teach indigenous languages in the classroom we can start to address the years and years of language deficiency that Aboriginal people have experienced."

Course titles include Introduction to Total Physical Response and Drama for Language Learning, Traditional and Contemporary Music, Song and Dance, Digital Technologies for Indigenous Language Learning, Identity and Higher Learning, and Immersion Language Camp.

The first language featured will be Cree. Prytula says it seemed a logical choice as the predominant language in the Treaty 6 area. It is also the language spoken by over 90 per cent of the Aboriginal students at the College of the Education.

The second indigenous language offered will be Michif. Michif is not a First Nations Language, but a Métis language. The choice was carefully made after community consultations. Renowned Michif language expert Norman Fleury will design the Michif certificate.

"There have been horrendous injustices done to the First Nations population, but also the Métis. And the Métis were not acknowledged in the same way as First Nations people," explains Prytula. "It's acknowledging past wrongs and it's making sure the Michif language doesn't disappear."

In fact, ensuring the survival of Aboriginal languages in Saskatchewan was the one of the goals of program, which was sparked by an encounter with a chief who asked if the College could do something to preserve languages like Cree and Michif. Facing the loss of knowledge keepers in the next few years, it was imperative to do something sooner rather than later.

"The problem is we're losing them (indigenous languages) and we needed to do something. The goal is not to lose them and to have every Aboriginal child who is interested know their own language, be proud of their own language and speak their own language," Prytula adds.

Language is a key part of creating identity. When students are proud of who they are and can speak the language of their ancestors without fear, those students are able to learn better. Better academic success can be achieved by engaging a student on all levels - language, culture, and spirituality.

In order to enroll in the certificate, applicants must either be a current College of Education student or a post-degree Education student with Bachelor of Education or Bachelor of Arts (Native Studies). Once completed, the Ministry of Education recognizes the certificate as a specialized qualification for teachers in Saskatchewan.

Because the focus is on immersing students in the language, most of the classes will be offered during the summer months, but some will be available in the fall and winter - seasons when storytelling is traditionally favoured.

Currently, the College of Education is hiring Cree language instructors for the fall semester. As more students become interested in the certificate, more languages and instructors will be added. In the future, full-time Cree-speaking faculty could facilitate someone doing their graduate studies in Cree. A student could someday write their thesis in Cree or another indigenous language.

"That's five or ten years down the road," says Prytula. "That is a goal of mine."

For now it remains a dream that drives Prytula to continue her work to expand course offerings in indigenous languages.

For more information about the Indigenous Language Certificate, visit www.usask.ca or contact 306-966-7686.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/launches+certificate+programs+indigenous+languages/11149769/story.html>

Island totem poles tell tales of lost history

[Katherine Dedyna](#) / Times Colonist
June 21, 2015 06:00 AM



Andy Everson stands next to a Kwakwaka'wakw totem pole carved by Richard Hunt in 1979 at the Royal B.C. Museum. The figure is missing a finger, a reflection of carver Richard Hunt's friendship with George Taylor. Thousands of people go past the totems at Thunderbird Park, wondering what they're about.
Photograph By DARREN STONE, Times Colonist

Thousands of people pass the totem poles in Thunderbird Park every day, but few know the meaning of the towering cedar carvings.

That doesn't stop them from deploying "some sort of deciphering process" to quickly misinterpret symbols that First Nations have passed down for centuries, said K'omoks First Nation artist Andy Everson.

Everson, who holds a master's degree in anthropology, took people on a free 12-totem tour Saturday as part of the second annual Aboriginal Cultural Festival. The three-day event coincides with National Aboriginal Day today.

Imposing artworks in their own right, totems are mnemonic devices, used to stimulate memories specific to certain peoples and their right to tell their own stories, he said.

"The art of carving totem poles was almost lost because the Canadian government actually banned potlatches," Everson said.

The gatherings coincided with totem poles raised to celebrate significant people or events and entailed days of feasting. They were banned for almost 70 years in Canada, from 1884 to 1951.

The ability of First Nations to tell their stories further declined as a result of the residential school system, Everson said. His grandfather was unable to remember details of his ancestral history after being beaten for speaking his native language.

On the tour, Everson pointed out male figures playing at bone games on one totem pole. Female figures at the top of the pole are depicted trying to distract the opposing team.

A figure outside the house of master carver Mungo Martin is missing a finger — a reflection of carver Richard Hunt's friendship with George Taylor, a director of Aboriginal Tourism B.C. Taylor lost part of a finger at age six after daring a playmate to chop it off with an axe they found on a beach.

Keith Henry, chief executive officer of Aboriginal Tourism B.C., said the festival, which began Friday, shows off the richness and diversity of First Nations' culture.

Aboriginals are proud of who they are and their culture is "alive and thriving," he said.

The turnout to the cultural festival is "exceeding expectations," Henry said. "Crowds watching the performances are three to four times the size they were last year."

The festival provides a positive counterpoint to the fallout from residential schools and the deaths of aboriginal women on the Highway of Tears.

"Some of our families have lived through these issues, but the fact is that we have a lot of extremely positive things happening. ... We're not all victims and we have a lot of proud, strong communities that despite the challenges are really thriving culturally and business-wise through aboriginal cultural tourism."

The Aboriginal Cultural Festival continues today from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the plaza outside the Royal B.C. Museum. For more information, go to aboriginalbc.com/victoria-aboriginal-festival.

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/island-totem-poles-tell-tales-of-lost-history-1.1975062#sthash.wje1Ndsp.dpuf>

Yoga, aboriginal celebrations mix, but not on Burrard Bridge



CTV Vancouver

Published Sunday, June 21, 2015 6:56PM PDT

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Sunday was both International Yoga Day and National Aboriginal Day, and multiple events in Vancouver aimed to bring the two together.

The controversial “Om the Bridge” event that would have shut down the Burrard Bridge for seven hours for a yoga class was cancelled, and a smaller event was held at the Plaza of Nations on Pacific Boulevard.

Hereditary Chief Phil Lane Jr. of the U.S.-based Chickasaw Nation was an invited guest at the Plaza of Nations event. He said the two celebrations -- International Yoga Day and National Aboriginal Day -- have a lot in common.



The International Yoga Day celebration at the Plaza of Nations in Vancouver was not as big as "Om the Bridge" was supposed to be. (CTV)

“Today is a global event in which many, many members of the human family everywhere are expressing their love and prayer and meditation and good feelings about unity,” he said.

Elsewhere in Vancouver, Moksha Yoga Burnaby was among the groups hosting a sit-in on the Stanley Park seawall to support First Nations that have mounted legal challenges against the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline.

Organizer Jesse Hodsman says with all the negative press 'Om the Bridge' -- which Premier Christy Clark announced earlier in the month -- got, the group is grateful to be hosting an alternative event.

Clark herself was at a National Aboriginal Day celebration in Kelowna, and she lamented the cancellation of “Om the Bridge.”

“I think there were a lot of people who would have loved to close down such a busy street as the bridge and bring some peace and reflection to it on a Sunday morning,” she said. “But there are lots of other ways to participate in yoga today.”

Direct Link: <http://bc.ctvnews.ca/yoga-aboriginal-celebrations-mix-but-not-on-burrard-bridge-1.2433747>

Bill Tierney: West Island has few signs of its aboriginal heritage

[Bill Tierney, Special to the Montreal Gazette](#)

Published on: June 23, 2015 | Last Updated: June 23, 2015 3:34 PM EDT



Commission chairman Justice Murray Sinclair (centre) and fellow commissioners Marie Wilson (right) and Wilton Littlechild discuss the commission's report on Canada's residential school system at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Ottawa on Tuesday, June 2, 2015. Adrian Wyld / THE CANADIAN PRESS

It isn't fun to wake up on a bright summer morning and, just when you are starting to think that this really is the summer of your winter dreams, you are called upon to acknowledge that you are a contributing party to "cultural genocide."

Yes, you had a hand in the intentional mass destruction of Canada's aboriginal cultures. You are not an innocent bystander, not someone who wandered into the house by mistake, but an actual participant, even if it is in your ignorance.

And if you are born and brought up in Canada, it's probably even worse: with those residential schools you were trying to make aboriginal peoples become just like you, to be able to compete with you. But, in fact, you were making all those children forced into residential schools even more screwed up than those of us who went away to other parts of the world, to those awful boarding schools with their quotas of sadists and sexual predators.

At least those boarding schools weren't committed to eradicating our languages and culture. Not completely anyway.

How can so much cruelty have been tolerated?

At least those of us who are immigrants have a weak excuse. I knew nothing about the aboriginal peoples of Nova Scotia when I first emigrated. I know very little about the Algonquin people in Quebec. I know very little about the Mohawks. Nobody talks about them unless they're being arrested or blocking a bridge. They are invisible until they erupt.

And saying sorry isn't enough. You know we have to do something — something big, like building-a-railway-across-the-country big.

Not that you've done anything wrong, not you personally. In fact, we can live in a place like the West Island without ever running into aboriginal people, alone or in tribes. Way

back in 2010, I wrote a column about the absence of information about the tribes that used to occupy and live in our territory, which is where my house was set down. I suggested that Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue's municipal council might put up a small sign with a little history of our place, displaying the names given to our area by the Algonquin and Mohawks who fished and hunted here, "Tiotenactokte" and "Skanawetsy." I was very grateful for the sign celebrating the passage of our Irish poet, Thomas More, down at the Frazer House. Maybe it's time for some aboriginal recognition?

I know what you're thinking: Why didn't I put up a sign when I was mayor?

Well, here's one reason: the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada hadn't just admitted that our governments' Indian policies, stretching back to the abhorrent Indian Act of 1876 ('Act respecting Indians ...' which doesn't respect them at all, does it?) were a form of cultural genocide. Prime Minister Stephen Harper may disagree, but his top legal expert doesn't hesitate to call it a deliberate extinguishing set of policies.

Let's face it: in the West Island, the aboriginal culture is invisible. Tecumseh is the name of the street on which West Island College is sited. The only other signs that immediately come to mind in our area touching the original inhabitants of our territory commemorate the massacres of Indian people, probably being shot at as they paddled away from our firearms. After the Europeans got really established here, it must have been an increasingly hard place to be an aborigine.

And then on this bright summer morning in 2015, here comes Justice Murray Sinclair, chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

And I've no doubt our civil service ancestors at Native Affairs, and not so long ago, thought they were doing their very best for the native population. It makes you wonder about all the other departments in Ottawa that might be in the throes of making huge mistakes in other fields. The environment, for example.

After a month of Truth and Reconciliation national shock therapy, who's going to keep reminding us about the damage we've done? The CBC's Rex Murphy has done the show. Now, who's going to keep us searching for a way to reconcile with the First Nations?

It's easy for me to say.

Bill Tierney is a former mayor of Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue.

Direct Link: <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/west-island-gazette/bill-tierney-west-island-has-few-signs-of-its-aboriginal-heritage>

U of S remembers aboriginal soldiers

By Henrytye Glazebrook, The StarPhoenix June 20, 2015



Phil Ledoux was among the veterans who attended a roundtable at the University of Saskatchewan on Friday in Saskatoon to discuss the contributions made by Canada's First Nations in the First World War.

Ray Sanderson's grandfather, Patrick Brittain, was among the first soldiers to see a tank roll onto the battlefield during the First World War.

To hear Sanderson relate the tale, which was told to him by his uncle as a boy, is to understand how staggering the experience must have been.

"All of a sudden we heard this metal coming in the back, and there was this big monster machine coming. It scared the hell out of us. Some of the boys ran from the trench they were so scared," Sanderson said, recounting his grandfather's words.

Sanderson was among a group of men - many of whom were veterans with their own stories from their time in the military - who gathered in the Peter MacKinnon Building at the University of Saskatchewan on Friday to participate in a roundtable discussion about the contributions made to the Great War by Canada's First Nations population.

The event was part of the university's ongoing RememberUS program, a series of events looking back on the First World War. The project began in 2014 to commemorate the global conflict's 100th anniversary and will continue until 2018 to similarly honour the day it drew to a close.

Lyndon Linklater, who works for the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and the Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans Association, explained Canada's murky history with aboriginal soldiers.

They came back to a country that shirked responsibility for promises it had made and deprived its First Nations citizens of basic rights, such as the ability to have a lawyer

represent them in court or practise their spiritual beliefs, he noted. Although much has changed in the intervening years, Linklater stressed the need to uncover the hidden history of the aboriginal soldiers who fought for their country.

"It's very important because we need to bring recognition to the contributions that aboriginal soldiers made to the accomplishments of Canada in terms of the freedom that we all enjoy today," Linklater said.

"There is, unfortunately, a huge missing piece in our history, and lots of people don't know the stories. We need to educate people to get them to understand. That's what we're trying to do."

Sanderson has made his own effort to heal the wounds which have festered in the relationship between Canada and its aboriginal soldiers. In his work, he has helped to place headstones on the graves of 10 First Nations people who died while serving their country - a task Canada promised and failed to do itself when the Great War ended.

When he was eight years old, Sanderson remembers asking his grandfather to explain the meaning of the word 'war.' Britain's response, which was translated from its original Cree by his grandson, was a succinct, harrowing and surprisingly apt definition.

"No. I do not talk about something so dirty."

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/remembers+aboriginal+soldiers/11153183/story.html>

Aboriginal Jobs & Labour

First Nations workers protest Fairview Terminal expansion contracts going to out-of-town firms



A group of protesters gather at the entrance to Fairview Terminal in Prince Rupert.

by [Shaun Thomas - The Northern View](#)

posted Jun 18, 2015 at 4:00 PM

A group of First Nations workers who have seen contracts related to the expansion of Fairview Terminal go to out-of-town businesses have taken to protesting at the entrance of the terminal.

"We're protesting against the port authority. They are not holding up their end of the bargain that was put in place several years ago to employ Kitkatla, Metlakatla and Port Simpson for Phase 2 of Fairview Terminal. Fraser River Pile and Dredge got the primary contract and now we turn around and Bear Creek Contracting has the contract for the blasting and moving the material," said Don Nelson of Kitkatla, noting members of Kitkatla, Metlakatla and Lax Kw'alaams are all participating in the action.

"We're trying to get our people into the workforce and hold the port authority to account ... there are a lot of people who are qualified to do the job who live here."

The agreement in question was signed by the Federal Government, Prince Rupert Port Authority and Coast Tsimshian First Nations in 2011 and stated First Nations would be provided with preferred contracting opportunities associated with the development of the container terminal development.

However, Prince Rupert Port Authority manager of corporate communications Michael Gurney said the organization is living up to the 2011 deal.

"First Nations joint ventures, under the terms of the benefit agreement, do have preferential treatment, but the winning contractor needs to have a cost competitive bid. One of the bids received by one of the joint ventures, in this case, was no cost competitive so it was not chosen," he explained, adding the issue surrounding contracts

being awarded is related to companies vying for work from primary contractors Fraser River Pile and Dredge and Bel Contracting.

"The terms continue to be honoured and we continue to enjoy a good relationship with First Nations joint ventures ... and have been working with them to conduct outreach to several communities in the region including potential employment opportunities."

Nelson said the group has had conversations with the port authority around this subject, but has now taken to protesting the awarding of the contracts. This is not the first time this has been an issue since the expansion of the terminal was announced, with [protests also taking place in April](#).

Direct Link: <http://www.thenorthernview.com/news/308291441.html>

Nunavik Inuit need more support to enter job market: report

"Specialized services are essential"

SARAH ROGERS, June 23, 2015 - 11:40 am



Barbara Veevee, Montreal-based but originally from Pangnirtung, works on her resume at the Ivirtivik employment resource centre in Montreal earlier this year. (FILE PHOTO)

Quebec Inuit communities are struggling to gain a foothold in the labour market in both Nunavik and Montreal, and a new report prepared by a group of Quebec employment support organizations offers some insight as to why.

Employment services available for Inuit both north and south have offered much-needed support, but the report suggests that Inuit could use more specialized help adapted to their cultural background.

In other words, it's not just about wearing a tie to the job interview.

A Quebec career development umbrella organization, called the Regroupement québécois des organismes pour le développement de l'employabilité (RQuODE), teamed up with the Kativik Regional Government and the Canadian Career Development Foundation to look at what sort of specific challenges Nunavimmiut face in trying to enter the job market.

"They want to work. They want to make a living. And they want to contribute to their communities," said Sophie Mathers, a career development consultant who has worked with the KRG.

"But some of the strategies aren't working. So we wanted to see what doesn't work."

For starters, the cash economy is still a relatively new and imported concept in Nunavik – the job market was only introduced in the region in the 1930s.

And even today, eight in 10 Nunavik adults still take part in harvesting activities as a form of food security.

So there can be misconceptions around what constitutes "being employed" when Inuit find ways to support their families without receiving an actual pay cheque.

But low employment rates plague the region: 19.6 per cent — about one in five — of Nunavimmiut were on welfare in 2011, more than double the 7.5 per cent elsewhere in Quebec.

Most Nunavik residents who are employed work for regional organizations in public administration, health care and education.

But many Inuit who were interviewed in the study point out that pursuing a career is not so ingrained in northern culture; that jobs are more just a means to provide for the family.

Based on the research and interviews compiled for the report, Mathers says regional organizations and other job support services can improve the way they help Inuit find satisfying jobs, and keep those jobs, in a way that still integrates and respects Inuit culture.

Career development services shouldn't be seen as a placement centre, she said.

"It's a process," she said. "But for [Inuit], it can be intimidating and hard to understand."

From a job counselling perspective, the report notes the importance of including family during career development, or incorporating traditional learning methods into the process, such like storytelling.

“Specialized services are essential,” Mathers said.

That means ensuring job counsellors are well-trained and prepared to understand cultural differences, from communication styles and personal values to adapting to a new workplace.

Programs like [Iviritivik, an employment and education resource centre](#) for Inuit based in both Montreal and Inukjuak, have done a good job bridging the gap, Mathers said, although both staff and clients could benefit from expanded training.

The French-language report, called “Research of indicators for creating original employment support adapted to an Inuit clientele”, calls for for better government support for job training and education.

And that can happen without assimilation, the report notes.

You can read a copy of the report [here](#). The English and Inuktitut translation will be published later this year.

The second phase of the report, a reference guide for employment, will be released in January 2016, Mathers said.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavik_inuit_need_more_support_to_enter_job_market_report/

Aboriginal Politics

Tyler Duncan hopes to become MKO grand chief

[Molly Gibson Kirby](#) / Thompson Citizen

June 19, 2015 12:00 AM



Tyler Duncan, 19, originally from Norway House Cree Nation, is in the running to become grand chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak. Duncan announced his candidacy on June 12. Photograph By Courtesy of Tyler Duncan

Tyler Duncan has officially stated he will be running for grand chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) in September.

Duncan, who is 19 years old, has accomplished a lot so far in his short time on Earth, with three terms as the youth chief of Norway House Cree Nation, a term as youth grand chief for MKO youth council, and a campaign for the presidency of the NDP in Manitoba. All this will help the young man, he says. “I want to run for MKO grand chief because I believe in my leaders to make this necessary and needed change in our MKO organization. I am running because my idea of leadership is not stepping up to run when you want, but when the people call on you to rise into action. I have felt this call loud and clear from some strong leaders in our region, and this is why I’ve decided to move forward with my campaign for the MKO leadership.”

Duncan kicked off his campaign on June 12 and plans to release pamphlets on his platform in the near future. Although the platform hasn’t been announced, he says there is action that needs to happen if he becomes grand chief, especially in restoring the credibility and integrity of the organization. “As grand chief, I will do so with the direct advice from chiefs, councils, and people of the communities on where the organization should go moving forward. Putting in place measures for financial accountability and transparency will be key. As well as restoring the strength of the organization by getting back to our purpose – advocacy. With strong advocacy and an accountable and open organization, we will restore its integrity, will restore its credibility by taking its advocacy to strength and heights it hasn’t seen before. We will do this together, in the spirit of unity, collaboration, and goodwill, for the betterment of our people.”

Duncan says he knows he has accomplished something when he feels that he has bettered the lives of his people. He credits his family, mentors, community and his god for making all this possible.

The hopeful grand chief is visiting northern communities currently, and meeting with the leadership. “I’ve loved having the opportunity to listen, learn, and take forward the ideas, objectives, and vision from our chiefs and councillors for how our MKO should move

forward. Things have been going very well, support has been strong, and our leadership are eager and hopeful to see change, renewal, and hope for MKO and what we can accomplish together, for our people.”

MKO represents 30 Northern Manitoba First Nations. The election will take place in Nelson House on Sept. 2.

- See more at: <http://www.thompsoncitizen.net/news/nickel-belt/tyler-duncan-hopes-to-become-mko-grand-chief-1.1972637#sthash.FZoT4287.dpuf>

Brian Bowman names members to Winnipeg indigenous advisory committee

1st meeting of Mayor's Indigenous Advisory Circle to be held Sept. 17

[CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 22, 2015 10:04 AM CT Last Updated: Jun 22, 2015 7:40 PM CT

Just months after being labelled Canada's most racist city, Winnipeg Mayor Brian Bowman has revealed the full membership of a special committee that will advise the city on ways to "build awareness, bridges and understanding" between the aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities.

Bowman first announced the creation of the Mayor's Indigenous Advisory Circle (MIAC) back in March, during his state of the city address. At that time, Bowman also appointed Wab Kinew as the chair.



Hoop dancers perform at Monday's announcement for the Mayor's Indigenous Advisory Circle. (Sean Kavanagh/CBC)

"To create unity and equality, we must build understanding. Through MIAC, much of the important work building strong bridges in our community will continue," Bowman said on Monday.

"I want to thank each member of the circle for sharing their experience and knowledge to help build a stronger Winnipeg."

Most racist city



Wab Kinew, the associate vice-president for indigenous relations at the University of Winnipeg, listens on Monday as the mayor's indigenous advisory circle members are announced at city hall. (Sean Kavanagh/CBC)

A Jan. 22 Maclean's Magazine article labelling Winnipeg the most racist city in Canada helped prompt the formation of the circle.

"Five months since the Maclean's article, we have sort of grappled with what that means. We've sort of taken our lumps as a city, but now I think we've returned to a place where we can move forward in a good way," Kinew said.

The advisory committee will help implement suggestions that came out of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and work to improve the economic lives of indigenous people in the city, Kinew said.

"The whole city would be better off if every kid reaches their full potential. If every indigenous person in this city was doing better, everyone benefits," Kinew said. "A rising tide lifts all boats."

'Ushering in a new era'

Kinew, the associate vice-president for indigenous relations at the University of Winnipeg, said he looks forward "to ushering in an era when First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures are celebrated by all Winnipeggers."

"In terms of the broader vision of making Winnipeg a place that celebrates the indigenous component to its identity, that's going to be a years-long process."

The advisory circle will start off with a training program for city staff on indigenous culture. It will also look for ways to make indigenous women and girls safer on the streets.

The MIAC meetings will be held quarterly, with the first meeting set for Sept. 17.

The full list of indigenous advisory circle members includes:

- Mayor Brian Bowman
- Wab Kinew, chair
- Coun. Cindy Gilroy
- Harry Bone, elder
- Mae Louise Campbell, elder
- Esther Ducharme, elder
- Marcia Anderson-Decoteau
- Jessica Dumas
- EJ Fontaine
- Damon Johnston
- Kimberley Puhach
- Dee Thomas-Hart
- Manley A. Begay Jr.
- Cindy Blackstock
- Alan Greyeyes
- Chief Robert Louie
- Sean McCormick
- Justice Murray Sinclair
- Kerri Tattuinee
- Jamie Wilson

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/brian-bowman-names-members-to-winnipeg-indigenous-advisory-committee-1.3122738>

Lac Des Milles Lacs First Nation election results under review

Aboriginal Affairs investigates reports of Indian status cards printed in Thunder Bay hotel room

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 24, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Jun 24, 2015 11:11 AM ET



Kathleen Sawdo is challenging the Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation election results, but is uncertain whether she would run for chief again if a new election is called.

Aboriginal Affairs is reviewing a complaint that Indian status cards were being issued out of a Thunder Bay, Ont. hotel room as part of a scheme to re-elect the incumbent chief at Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation.

The election took place on June 8, returning Judy Maunula to office. Her challenger, Kathleen Sawdo, is appealing the results under the First Nation's custom election code.

The electoral officer wrongly told Lac Des Mille Lacs citizens they needed a valid status card to vote and the cards were issued in secret hotel room meetings with voters supportive of Maunula, Sawdo alleges.

"Had it been done out of band office, open to the entire population, I'm sure it would have been fine," Sawdo said of the effort to issue new status cards to members. "But the fact is, I've never, ever heard of status cards being issued out of a hotel room, in secret."

'She looked me in the eye and told me not to say anything'

A sworn statement from Lac Des Mille Lacs citizen Margaret Peters forms part of Sawdo's formal request for an appeal of the election.



One of the Indian status cards that is alleged to have been fraudulently issued as part of an scheme in the Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation elections. (submitted by Kathleen Sawdo)

In the statement, Peters said she was taken by her mother to a room at the the Valhalla Inn on May 30, where she and several other band members received new status cards from an employee of Bimose Tribal Council.

"She [the Bimose employee] looked me in the eyes and told me not to say anything about what took place in the hotel room, as it was not legal and she was only doing this as a favour to my chief, Judy Maunula," Peters said in her statement.

A spokesperson for Aboriginal Affairs said it takes "allegations of improper distribution of status cards very seriously" and if fraud or misconduct is found, the information is turned over to police.

CBC News left telephone and email messages at the First Nation administration office requesting an interview with Maunula, but has not heard back.

Spoiled ballots

Maunala garnered 151 votes, with Sawdo, her only challenger receiving 107. There were 19 spoiled ballots.

Sawdo questions the number of spoiled ballots and also feels the requirement of having a valid status card likely discouraged her supporters from even attempting to vote. It can take months to renew a status card through regular channels.

But Sawdo said if she is successful in her request for an appeal of the election results, she may not run again. She hopes a fair election process would draw more candidates.

People from Lac Des Mille Lacs were flooded off their traditional lands many years ago and most scattered across the continent, creating challenges for community building, Sawdo said.

"So many people want to be involved, we've been disbursed so long and now we're trying to come together as a community and when this barrier to voting, to participating is held up it's not conducive to bringing the community together," Sawdo said. "Regardless of how they vote, they should be able to vote and participate."

The experience is also a cautionary tale for other First Nations considering creating their own election code, rather than using the Aboriginal Affairs template, Sawdo said.

"I would recommend if other First Nations plan on doing this, ensure that it is done fairly," she said. "When it's designed in such a way that a chief and council can stay in forever, that defeats the purpose of having elections."

Corrections

- A previous version of this story said Margaret Peters received her status card on June 1. The correct date, according to Peters' sworn statement, is May 30.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/lac-des-milles-lacs-first-nation-election-results-under-review-1.3124765>

Remove 2% cap on funding for on reserve programs: committee

'Embarrassing that we have a population in Canada living in third-world conditions,' says Carolyn Bennett

By Kristy Kirkup, The Canadian Press Posted: Jun 24, 2015 3:47 PM ET Last Updated: Jun 24, 2015 6:28 PM ET



Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples recommends a call to create a new ministerial loan guarantee program to help pay for infrastructure on reserves. (John Woods/CP)

The Aboriginal Affairs department should remove the two per cent cap on annual funding increases for reserve programs and services, a Senate committee recommended Tuesday.

In its findings, the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples said reserve funding needs to account for inflation in First Nations communities and the growing aboriginal population.

Aboriginal people remain the fastest-growing population in Canada.

The committee's recommendations also include a call to create a new ministerial loan guarantee program to help pay for infrastructure on reserves. The report acknowledges that federal funding alone won't allow First Nations to meet infrastructure needs, but said the government could make more progress if it can help communities leverage financing.

The Senate committee began its work in November 2013, which involved visiting communities to study challenges first-hand. It heard from more than 80 witnesses including individual First Nations members, aboriginal organizations and federal agencies.

"People took us into their homes; this was not always easy," Conservative Sen. Dennis Patterson told a news conference.

"We saw homes with mould ... we saw condemned homes that people had moved back into because there was no other place to live. But we were impressed by the resourcefulness of the communities and the community members."

'Canadians expect fairness and equal opportunity, and this is now increasingly embarrassing that we have a population in Canada living in third-world conditions.' - *Carolyn Bennett, Liberal aboriginal affairs critic*

Liberal aboriginal affairs critic Carolyn Bennett said she wants the federal government to act on the recommendations.

"This is an all-party committee dominated by Conservatives, they had to admit that this is truth," Bennett said.

"Canadians expect fairness and equal opportunity, and this is now increasingly embarrassing that we have a population in Canada living in third-world conditions."

The report demonstrates the upper chamber is still doing important work, Patterson said, even as it endures scrutiny and criticism over the controversial travel and housing expenses of some members and allegations of personal misconduct by others.

Conservative Sen. Scott Tannas, who was also part of the committee, agreed.

"This is the important work that we do, this is what gets a senator out of bed these days," Tannas said. "It is valuable, it is important and we put our heart and soul into it, and our brains."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/remove-2-cap-on-funding-for-on-reserve-programs-committee-1.3125710>

Aboriginal Sports

'Life-changing': N.W.T. heads to Native American Basketball Invitational

152-team tournament features squads from across the United States, team N.W.T. only Canadian entry

[CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 23, 2015 7:21 AM CT Last Updated: Jun 23, 2015 7:21 AM CT



The 2013 Native American Basketball Invitational contingent from the Northwest Territories. The 2015 team will be assembled when the players fly out of their home communities this Friday. (Submitted by Neil Barry)

A group of young basketball players from the Northwest Territories will board a plane for Phoenix this Friday, heading to the largest native basketball tournament in the world.

The group of players — from Inuvik, Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, and Deline — will compete in the Native American Basketball Invitational, a 152-team tournament featuring squads from across the United States. The Northwest Territories' contingent is the only Canadian squad making the trip.



Barry, who is from Fort Simpson, says making the trip can be 'life changing' for his players. 'Seeing that they can play at a high level and see each other succeed, and knowing what they have to work on to get to that next level and that they can see right in front of them that it's possible. (Submitted by Neil Barry)

Neil Barry, the team's coach, has brought teams to the tournament on multiple occasions. To the players lucky enough to make the trip, the experience can be "life-changing," he says.

Generating the funds to make the trip wasn't easy for Barry's team. To do so, they had to collectively raise \$30,000 — money that was generated through donations in the athletes' home communities, [a GoFundMe page](#), and organizations and businesses within the territory.

The group of First Nation, Metis, Inuit and Inuvialuit players will get the chance to strut their stuff on the court at the highest level — the team will play at the U.S. Airways Centre, home of the NBA's Phoenix Suns — but will also represent the territory off the court, planning to perform cultural demonstrations.

"The biggest thing," says Barry, "is just the pride of native athletes, indigenous athletes from around the world.

"Seeing that they can play at a high level and see each other succeed, and knowing what they have to work on to get to that next level and that they can see right in front of them that it's possible. I think those possibilities don't always exist in the Northwest Territories."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/life-changing-n-w-t-heads-to-native-american-basketball-invitational-1.3123942>

Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

Alberta Cree band sues Calgary's Penn West for \$10 million

By Ryan Cormier, Edmonton Journal June 18, 2015

A northern Alberta Cree band is suing Calgary's Penn West Petroleum Ltd. for \$10 million over damage to traditional lands it says was caused by pipeline leaks.

The Woodland Cree First Nation filed a statement of claim this month that says pipeline spills in June 2013, October 2013 and April 2014 contaminated the environment and local wildlife on their lands.

The spills and resulting remediation damaged "trees, bushes, vegetation, soils, water and other elements of the natural habitat within the spill sites. The plants, animals and fish that the Woodland Cree First Nation members rely upon to exercise their treaty and aboriginal rights were removed, destroyed or disturbed."

The spills adversely affected fish, beavers, moose, elk, bears, ducks, small birds and muskrats on Woodland Cree land along the Peace River, the lawsuit states.

Previously, the Cree band used the land for hunting, fishing, trapping and camping. Ongoing contamination limits Cree use of the land and has caused psychological trauma and loss of both culture and livelihood for the First Nation, the claim reads.

In June 2013, gas and crude oil spilled from a pipeline southwest of Cadotte Lake and contaminated a square kilometre of land. In October 2013, a smaller spill in the same area affected only 300 square metres.

In April 2014, a third leak contaminated an unspecified area of land, the lawsuit states.

These spills, the Cree band says, resulted from Penn West's failure to operate pipelines in a "safe and responsible manner." Penn West also failed to conduct proper testing and maintenance on its pipelines and did not have proper procedures in place to respond to a leak.

The Woodland Cree First Nation also states that Penn West did not properly inform them of procedures after the leaks.

The Woodland Cree First Nation has about 1,000 members.

Statements of claim contain allegations not proven in court.

Direct Link:

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/Alberta+Cree+band+sues+Calgary+Penn+West+million/11148398/story.html>

New Nunavut national park bill gets speedy passage

IIBA requires training of Inuit park manager, Inuit co-management, preferential Inuit hiring and contracting

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, June 22, 2015 - 7:05 am



The World Wildlife Fund and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association each welcome the creation of Qausuittuq National Park in the High Arctic. (PARKS CANADA HANDOUT PHOTO)

With unanimous support from all parties, a bill to create a new 20,000 square-kilometre national park around Nunavut's Bathurst Island breezed through the House of Commons in minutes June 19, and is now set for first reading in the Senate.

If the bill gets speedy passage through the upper house and receives royal assent, Qausuittuq National Park of Canada would likely become legal Sept. 1, 2015, just a few weeks before the Oct. 19 federal election.

“As the bill makes its way to the Senate, I would like to encourage all senators to support the Qausuittuq National Park of Canada Act for our environment and for northerners,” Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq said June 19 in a statement, four days after [tabling the bill June 15.](#)

The World Wildlife Fund and the Qikiqtani Inuit Association each welcomed the creation of the new park.

“I’m excited for the potential cultural and socio-economic opportunities this will bring to Inuit and I look forward to going up to Resolute Bay to celebrate the event with the community,” QIA president P.J. Akeeagok said in a statement.

Through provisions contained in their [Inuit impact and benefit agreement](#), the QIA will share management duties with Parks Canada.

And Inuit will continue to exercise their right to hunt, set up outpost camps and to remove carving stone within the park’s boundaries.

Each party will name three people, one of whom must be a member of Resolute’s Hunters and Trappers Organization, to serve on a six-person park management committee.

That committee will make decisions related to tourism, research, hiring and contracting.

Calling it a “unique and ecologically sensitive area,” the WWF also welcomed the new park and urged Parliament to pass and implement the bill quickly.

“As part of the last ice area, this national park — Nunavut’s fifth — would safeguard an area that will become increasingly important to northern wildlife and peoples as our climate continues to warm,” Paul Crowley, WWF-Canada’s Arctic vice-president, said in a statement.

The park, which will become Canada’s ninth largest, takes up a large chunk of Bathurst Island north of the Polar Bear Pass National Wildlife Area and includes some islands to the west.

But it excludes Cameron Island, where small commercial quantities of crude oil were extracted in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Bill C-72 establishes the park’s boundaries and adds it to a list attached to the National Parks Act.

But the national park’s real blueprint is set out in the 64-page Inuit impact and benefit agreement between Ottawa and the QIA.

Though it’s not clear if the deal’s been signed, the IIBA says the deal took effect this past April 1.

In it, Parks Canada commits itself to spending \$21.9 million over seven years to develop and run the park, and to spend about \$2.6 million a year thereafter.

They also promise to hire and train an Inuk park manager within five years.

Under the IIBA, Parks Canada may hire a non-beneficiary parks manager, but only as a term position that would end when the beneficiary trainee is ready to take over.

To pay for the training of the park's Inuk trainee manager, the IIBA requires that Ottawa spend \$175,000 over five years, for on-the-job training and post-secondary education.

The park creates only four full-time jobs:

- the term job of park manager;
- an indeterminate job for the park manager trainee;
- an indeterminate job for a resource management and public safety specialist; and,
- an indeterminate job for an administrative assistant.

They'll be augmented by what appear to be six part-time or seasonal jobs: two patrollers, an interpretation officer, a maintenance worker, a public outreach and education officer and a half-time resource management and public safety specialist.

Staff will work out of a visitor and interpretation centre that Parks Canada will set up in Resolute. The IIBA also commits Parks Canada to supply necessary staff housing.

Businesses owned by Inuit or joint venture firms that include Inuit will get preferential treatment in the awarding of contracts.

Parks Canada will also give a \$3 million grant to QIA for the Qausuittuq National Park of Canada Inuit Initiatives Fund.

The QIA is supposed to use that money to help beneficiaries living in Resolute and elsewhere in the Qikiqtaaluk region take advantage of economic opportunities arising from the creation of the park.

The QIA also has the right to sit in on all processes related to the hiring of parks staff.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674new_nunavut_national_park_bill_get_s_speedy_passage/

West Coast Trail Guardians: First Nations blaze a path to reconciliation

JUSTINE HUNTER

VICTORIA — The Globe and Mail

Published Sunday, Jun. 21, 2015 8:56PM EDT

Last updated Monday, Jun. 22, 2015 11:40AM EDT

Paul Sieber of the Ditidaht First Nation spent 16 years hiking the West Coast Trail. His steps along the rugged Vancouver Island route, typically 20 kilometres each shift, would almost take him around the circumference of the Earth. “Within our territory, I know where to step, I know where every root is, it is burned into my memory.”

Working for Parks Canada, he has done trail maintenance and helped with countless medical emergencies along the way – about 75 hikers will be evacuated each year off the challenging trail. But most of all, he has served as an ambassador for the First Nations who have called this region home for thousands of years.

The West Coast Trail Guardians have been teaching visitors their history for 20 years in a program that has developed into a welcome cultural experience.

Last week, the B.C. government announced it will, in the name of reconciliation, ensure First Nations history is part of the school curriculum – including the difficult legacy of Canada’s residential school system. The province marked National Aboriginal Day on Sunday with a funding announcement for the Canadians for Reconciliation Society to lead public dialogues.

B.C. is inching toward a more productive relationship with First Nations. The province charts progress with the 150 non-treaty agreements it has signed with aboriginal communities in the past two years. But to make any kind of significant leap forward, the public has to embrace the need for change.

Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister John Rustad marked National Aboriginal Day in Prince George at a ceremony to rename a city park as a memorial for one of the local First Nations, the Lheidli T’enneh, whose village was burned down to make way for the city’s expansion. It is a controversial move and he acknowledged that these changes are easier when the public has been brought along.

“Reconciliation isn’t just about aboriginal people, it’s about all of us having an understanding of our history,” Mr. Rustad said. “It’s much more than signing an agreement; it’s a conversation that needs to be had,” he said.

The Guardians have been a part of the conversation.

The 75-kilometre trail was established more than a century ago to help shipwrecked mariners reach safety. Today, about 6,000 hikers each year tackle the route between the

communities of Port Renfrew and Bamfield, perched on the southwest edge of Vancouver Island.

Hikers traverse through the traditional territories of the Pacheedaht, Ditidaht and Huu-ay-aht First Nations. In the 1990s, as the trail gained popularity, those communities were concerned that sacred and sensitive areas, including a graveyard, were being blithely trampled by backpackers. They were unhappy, too, that they had been mostly shut out of the Parks Canada jobs doing maintenance on the trails in their communities.

Wally Samuel Jr. from the nearby Ahousaht First Nation managed the Guardian program for a decade. He said the program had its roots in conflict: “It was a clash of two cultures,” he said. “There was an evolution to respect and understanding.”

He ensured the Guardians were not just cleaning latrines and repairing the trail. They are trained in the art of communication, so they can share their stories, their connection with the place, with the visitors who come from around the globe. “That was the best part for me – teaching them to be proud of who they are, that they are valuable, that they know something.”

Jim Morgan was appointed the First Nations program manager for Pacific Rim National Park in 1995, and the trail’s Guardian program was launched that year. Each of the three aboriginal communities has trained staff to patrol and maintain the trail throughout the hiking season. They also provide orientation crews who meet backpackers at the trail heads to help prepare them for the gruelling hike ahead.

“We were ahead of the curve, to build better relationships with the First Nations,” said Mr. Morgan, who is now superintendent of the national park. Happily, Parks Canada discovered that trail users loved it.

“We get continuous positive comments from the hikers – it is so exciting to meet up with one of these Guardians around the campfire, to have them tell stories or sing songs. The visitors love it; it gives them a sense of the cultural part of the experience,” he said. “People are starving for that.”

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/west-coast-trail-guardians-blaze-a-path-to-reconciliation/article25050920/>

Harry Potter star supports Nunavut town’s fight against seismic testing

“Seismic blasting... threatens marine life that are already vulnerable to impacts of climate change”

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, June 22, 2015 - 3:20 pm



Academy Award-winning actor Emma Thompson, seen here at a climate change march in London in September 2014, recently joined Naomi Klein and David Suzuki in supporting Clyde River's David-vs-Goliath fight against seismic testing off the coast of Baffin Island. (WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO)

Oscar-winning British actor Emma Thompson has thrown her support behind the Inuit of Clyde River and their fight against seismic testing.

In a news release published through Greenpeace, Thompson signed her name to a [statement](#) requesting that the National Energy Board reverse a decision that approves offshore seismic surveying in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait.

Thompson said it's an "honour" to support Clyde River's fight.

"Inuit have been stewards of the Arctic for millennia and it's terrifying to think the region could be devastated by the greed of oil companies in an instant," Thompson said in the Greenpeace news release.

"Seismic blasting — a precursor to destructive oil drilling — threatens marine life that are already vulnerable to impacts of climate change," she said.

"If companies get away with drilling for oil, communities will then have to deal with oil spills in Arctic waters that are impossible to clean up."

The companies who wanted to conduct seismic testing off the east coast of Baffin Island recently [backed away](#) from plans to begin the seabed mapping during this summer's ice-free season, which usually begins in July.

But that doesn't mean they won't one day embark on the five-year project. Right now, they're just waiting for some legal wrangling to play out, and hoping it ends in their favour.

The Hamlet of Clyde River, Mayor Jerry Natanine and the local Nammataq Hunters and Trappers Organization are currently embroiled in a [court appeal process](#) to reverse the [2014 NEB decision](#).

The lawyer representing the Inuit of Clyde River in the Federal Court of Appeal said the case is “about the right to eat.”

The panel of three federal court justices, who heard the case this spring in Toronto, have reserved their decision for the time being.

Thompson isn’t the only celebrity to come forward in support of the tiny North Baffin community.

Environmentalists David Suzuki, Elizabeth May, Naomi Klein and actor Lucy Lawless have also signed the statement.

Thompson is known for her roles in the Harry Potter movie series as Professor Sybil Trelawney.

She won an Oscar in 1992 for Best Actress for her role in the British drama *Howards End*.

Thompson is also the screenplay writer and lead-actor in the *Nanny McPhee* movies.

Seismic testing consists of a boat pulling an air gun which emits loud, underwater booms. Sound waves travel through water and into the ground below and are then interpreted to get a picture of what lies beneath the ocean floor.

Some marine scientists believe the sound waves are harmful to ocean mammals and fish and Inuit are therefore concerned about the impact this extensive mapping procedure will have on harvesting.

Inuit also argue they were not properly consulted, as is their constitutional right when development has the potential to impact culture and livelihood.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674harry_potter_star_supports_nunavut_towns_fight_against_seismic_testing/

Land Claims & Treaty Rights

First Nations 'pulling a Chilcotin' in resource development battles across Canada

By [Mychaylo Prystupa](#) in [News](#), [Energy](#) | June 20th 2015



Tsilhqot'in Chief Roger Williams of the Xeni Gwet'in band in the Nemiah Valley, March 2015. Photo by Mychaylo Prystupa, National Observer.

In the storied Nemiah Valley of the Chilcotin region of northern B.C., where tales of a bloody 150-year-ago war between Tsilhqot'in people and gold-seeking pioneers still loom large, Chief Roger Williams stands just a little more proudly among his wild horses this year.

On National Aboriginal Day, his people have the satisfaction of standing on native land owned outright with Aboriginal Title granted by the Supreme Court of Canada one year ago.

“We’re in title land right now. Just that feeling. I feel like I’m still celebrating,” laughed Chief William of the Xeni Gwet'in band, in a recent break-of-dawn interview on Tsilhqot'in territory.

And just as satisfying, he says, has been how that landmark ruling is now spreading across Canada.

While 'Idle No More' gave Aboriginal people new energy for their long-held grievances, the high court decision provided a powerful legal tool to advance their land rights.

Bands, from the Heiltsuk on the west coast to the Mi'kmaq on the east, and many Indigenous nations in between, are now invoking the Tsilhqot'in decision in Aboriginal battles over unwanted industrial incursions.

Multi-billion-dollar resource projects, past and proposed, are being challenged. Nearby Tk'emlups and Skeetchestn Indian bands in B.C.'s interior will use the decision on

Sunday to officially declare Aboriginal title on the site of a proposed Ajax copper-gold mine.

And notably, oil and gas pipelines from Alberta are taking a hit.



Chief Roger William Xenigwet'in Elders Meeting Tsilhqot'in Chilcotin truck mountains - Mychaylo Prystupa National Observer

The Tsilhqot'in decision will be a big part of the dozen-plus Aboriginal law suits against the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline in October, and the Tsleil-Waututh near Vancouver say they'll invoke the decision in a court challenge against Texas-based Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline expansion from Edmonton to Burnaby.

Chief Williams hears about the battles from afar.

'Pulling a Chilcotin'

“It’s been such an honour to hear First Nations say, ‘we’re going to pull a Chilcotin,’” he said with a grin.

The June 26, 2014 Supreme Court of Canada decision was arrived at after an astonishing 25-year court battle, initially over a logging dispute.

On that day, Williams and other band leaders were huddled in a Vancouver board room awaiting the verdict. And when the email came, with its unexpected eight-to-zero approval of the highest court judges, the room erupted in celebration.

“It was so surreal, it was like a ‘game changer,’” said William.

It was the first time in Canadian history that a court had declared Aboriginal title to lands outside of a reserve. First Nations and environmental groups immediately heralded it a "landmark" ruling, while industry said it provided greater “certainty” for their obligations to consult.

But privately, Victoria-based lawyer Robert Janes says, the ruling's requirement to first bring Indigenous leaders to the boardroom at the very start of a project's conception has not been an easy transition.

"That's been a hard pill for governments and industry to swallow," said Janes.

"Tsilhqot'in was about about the Aboriginal right to control resources, and require consent from industrial proponents."

"It was a call to arms."

Tsilhqot'in said the Supreme Court had rejected the "postage stamp" view of Canada's reserve system. "Aboriginal title is not restricted to small, intensively used sites. Aboriginal title extends to all the territory that a First Nation regularly and exclusively used when the Crown asserted sovereignty," stated [Tsilhqot'in National Government](#).

Janes said the ruling is more legally useful for bands that have not signed treaties —like most in B.C., and in pockets in Eastern Canada. But it's also emboldened communities.

"Tsilhqot'in's biggest effect has been political. There's no doubt it energized First nations, and woke people up to how far they can go with litigation."



AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde at the Truth and Reconciliation closing event on June 2. Photo by Ben Powless.

AFN National Chief on Tsilhqot'in

When Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde seized was elected in December, he spoke with passion about the decision's relevance at the AFN convention.

"To Canada we say, for too long have we been dispossessed of our homelands and the wealth of our rightful inheritance," he told hundreds of chiefs in Winnipeg.

“Canada will no longer develop pipelines, no longer develop transmission lines or any infrastructure on our lands as business as usual.”

“Canada is Indian land,” he added.



Mountains of the Nemiah Valley in Tsilhqot'in territory. Photo by Mychaylo Prystupa, National Observer.

The Saik'uz of B.C. are using the Tshilqot'in ruling in their pollution trial against smelter giant Rio Tinto in Kitimat. The Atikamekw of Quebec have declared "no development" without their say in more than 80,000 square kilometres of land near Montreal. And the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia contend the Tsilhqot'in case injected new steam in to their legal challenge over fracking.

Even in the heart of Alberta's oil sands in the province's northwest Peace River region, Tshilqot'in's ripple is being felt. Lubicon Cree are using it to sue a local oil company.

"It was a huge boost legally to our position," said Garrett Tomlinson, a Lubicon Lake Nation spokesperson and local reeve, about 500km northwest of Edmonton, AB.

The Lubicon oppose the huge build up of in situ heavy oil sands development and fracking that's cleared tens of thousands of hectares of boreal forest, injected roads into wildlife migrations routes, and causes ungulates and fish to be more cancerous tumours, they claim. Tomlinson says oil pipeline spills seem to occur every other month too.

Lubicon Cree Melina Laboucan-Massimo, a climate and energy campaigner, describes environmental impacts in her community in northwest Alberta. Greenpeace video.

“This idea that rising tides lift all boats has never been the case for the Lubicon. The Alberta government and energy companies have never stepped in to include Lubicon in the economy. It's always been divide and conquer, get the resources and get out.”

“There's been \$13.5 billion in royalties from Lubicon territory alone for the province of Alberta's benefit, while people around here have an average income of \$6,000 per year, and we lack basic infrastructure like running water.”

The band is unique in that Indian Act surveyors in 1898 pushed through this northern area signing chiefs up for treaties, but infamously missed this community. So they've never relinquished their land rights, and want restitution for the "environmental violence" committed.

In the Maritimes, where many First Nations signed "friendship treaties" but did not extinguish their rights, the Signigtog Mi'kmaq are suing over fracking issues. Lawyer Bruce McIvor says the Tsilqtot'in decision means pipeline companies are not able to get away with mere "box ticking" in their consultation efforts.

"They will be subject to the much more onerous burden of obtaining consent or justifying infringements," wrote [McIvor](#).

Industry watching

Watching Tsilqot'in's spread closely is the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

"The Supreme Court of Canada has provided important clarification in law on Aboriginal title. Where the decision applies, it has required extra effort by industry to gain an understanding of how it relates to the lands in which we operate," wrote spokesperson Chelsie Klassen from Calgary.

"Our members value and work hard to develop relationships with Aboriginal communities and will continue to work together to understand the application of this decision."



Suncor oil refinery outside of Fort McMurray, AB with the Syncrude Refinery visible in the background in 2009. Photo by Colin O'Connor, Greenpeace.

Much attention is also aimed at TransCanada and its Energy East pipeline. If built, it would become largest pipeline in North America —pumping Alberta bitumen to terminals in Quebec City and St.John, while slicing one-third of Canada's 622 Aboriginal communities.

"The decision has not impacted our continued commitment to build strong and trusting relationships with Aboriginal communities in proximity to our proposed projects," wrote TransCanada's spokesperson Mark Cooper.

"Our approach to Indigenous communities which is set out in our Aboriginal Relations Policy was adopted long before engagement with Indigenous communities became a regulatory requirement," he added.

Apology for historic wrongs



Xeni Gwet'in Chief Roger Williams in the Tsilhqot'in Nemiah Valley of northern B.C. in March. Photo by Mychaylo Prystupa, National Observer.

As a sign of Tsilhqot'in's growing stature, the Premier of B.C. Christy Clark apologized last fall for the wrongful hanging of six Tsilhqot'in war chiefs in 1864 and 1865. The conflict arose out of resource-seeking interlopers attempting to slice roads through the Chilcotin region. Eighteen whites were killed. Blankets with smallpox that wiped out the community followed.

The century-and-a-half-later exoneration was a symbolic gesture that's coinciding with new government negotiations on the transfer of vast sums of royalties that currently flow to the Crown from businesses, such as cattle ranches and lodge owners.

And getting to this position hasn't been easy. At an Elder's meeting, Chief William spoke to members about the strains on the band's purse, and how a long celebrated annual rodeo has struggled to find sponsors. Taking their land battle to the Supreme Court took an entire generation, and drained millions of dollars.

But the hope is, the royalties will bring improvements to the roads, school and health clinic.

The newfound sovereignty has also seen more an ambitious stand on grizzly bear management, with the Tsilhqot'in tribal chair recently declaring the province's hunting licenses in the area "illegal." Tsilhqot'in want more "believable" grizzly bear counts, and

the establishment of a Tribal Park that would among things protect grizzlies' salmon-eating habitat. The apex predators are considered sacred.

Chief William says the decision also strengthens their case against the Taseko Mines' proposed \$1.5-billion copper-gold project in the sacred Fish Lake area. The leader said he's not against all development, and the hope is tourism will grow. The areas' wild horses among the dry mountain views are considered a major draw.

"Economics is very important. Jobs. Opportunities. But we need to look at the ecosystem. We need to look at our culture. We need to come from that, to be sensitive," said William.



Wild Chilcotin horse in the Nemiah Valley of northern B.C. Photo by Mychaylo Prystupa, National Observer.

The chief is often asked to explain the Tsilqotin'in decision —to the Vancouver Board of Trade this past week, but also to young people in his community, where message is more fundamental.

“I would say to our children that you are the first persons of this country and you are recognized. You have Aboriginal rights and title, and that you have jurisdiction. You have traditional ancient history and laws, that put you here.”

"There's legends and stories about our people in this country and that's going to continue. And we're going to improve this country. That's what I'd tell em'."



Tsilhqot'in territory highway sign (Tl'etinqox-t'in) near Williams Lake, B.C. in March. Photo by Mychaylo Prystupa, National Observer.

Direct Link: <http://www.nationalobserver.com/2015/06/20/news/first-nations-pulling-chilcotin-resource-development-battles-across-canada>

One small step for Ring of Fire

By [Carol Mulligan](#), Sudbury Star

Saturday, June 20, 2015 12:50:24 EDT AM



Work goes on at the Ring of Fire Photo submitted

It was being heralded Friday by inside sources as a big deal and not a big deal at the same time.

Environment and Climate Change Minister Glen Murray announced Friday he had approved with amendments the terms of reference for Noront Resources' proposed Eagle's Nest mine in the Ring of Fire.

The terms of reference is the first step in the company's environmental assessment process and there is still a great deal of work to be done before a decision on the project is made, said Murray's aide, Lucas Malinowski.

The terms of reference is a work plan outlining the types of studies and consultation Noront must undertake to demonstrate whether its project can be developed in a way that is protective of the environment and human health.

Some of the amendments to Noront's terms include ensuring First Nations on which development could have an impact fully participate in and contribute to Noront's environmental assessment process.

The amendments include:

- Identifying and assessing alternate road alignments within Noront's preferred road corridor.
- Providing specific opportunities for potentially impacted First Nations to fully participate in the company's environmental assessment.
- Assessing the impact of aggregate extraction.
- Considering the impact of climate change on the project and the impacts of the project on climate change.

The president and chief executive officer of Noront Resources, Alan Coutts, appealed to the province in January to allow his company to begin work to develop Eagle's Nest nickel mine, while a plan was created to share resources over the long term with First Nations.

Noront submitted the terms of reference for its environmental assessment in 2012, and Coutts was looking for a decision so Noront could attract investors, negotiate impact benefit agreements with three First Nations near Eagle's Nest and begin mining ore.

Coutts told The Sudbury Star in January that Noront had been working with communities near Eagle's Nest for seven years and developed good relationships with them.

In an email, Malinowski said Ontario is committed to continuing work with the Matawa First Nations communities, with whom the province has reached a framework agreement, exploring ways in which participation in the environmental assessment process can be enhanced to better address First Nation community needs and interests.

Coutts visited several northern communities earlier this year, speaking with business people and community leaders about what he believed was needed to move Noront's Eagle's Nest project forward.

Coutts said Noront could begin developing the nickel mine following existing mining legislation, "and do it in the spirit of the framework agreement."

He said Noront's goals are essentially the same as those outlined in the framework agreement between the province and the Matawa First Nations. They are "to create a lot of wealth and share it," said Coutts.

Noront Resources is a Canadian-based mining company with the largest stake in the Ring of Fire. As well as Eagle's Nest, Noront acquired Cliffs Natural Resources chromite properties in April, giving it ownership or a controlling interest in all major discoveries in the Ring.

Information about Murray signing off on Noront's terms of reference was received by The Sudbury Star late Friday. Noront did not have time to provide comment before press time, nor did New Democrat mining critic, Algoma-Manitoulin MPP Michael Mantha.

Direct Link: <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2015/06/20/one-small-step-for-ring-of-fire>

Declaration of title over Jacko Lake officially signed by local First Nations

It's been signed and sealed, but will it deliver? Local First Nations sign the declaration of title

By Daybreak Kamloops, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 22, 2015 8:25 AM PT Last Updated: Jun 23, 2015 6:19 AM PT



Chiefs Ron Ignace, Wayne Christian and Shane Gottfriedson officially sign the declaration of title over Jacko Lake (Samantha Garvey/CBC)

Local First Nations call it a historic day.

Chiefs and band councillors of several nations in the Thompson-Shuswap area made their first declaration of title since the Tsilhqot'in land claims ruling last summer.

The declaration was signed Sunday on the shores of Jacko Lake, known in the Secwepemc language as Pipsell Lake.

It asserts sovereignty and full control over the area.

Jacko Lake is the largest body of water located next to the KGHM Ajax Mine project.

If approved, Ajax would use some of that body of water for its purposes.

And there would be damage done to the natural fish populations, according to Ajax's project description.

Almost 100 people were in attendance to watch the signing of the Jacko Lake declaration of title.

Daybreak's Samantha Garvey was there.

To hear the story, click the link: First Nations officially sign declaration of title over Jacko Lake

What will a declaration of Aboriginal Title at Jacko Lake mean for the proposed Ajax mine?

The company says that's a deep question because the issues involved are complex.

For a sense of where the project stands now, Daybreak spoke with Ajax External Affairs Manager, Yves Lacasse.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kamloops/declaration-of-title-over-jacko-lake-officially-signed-by-local-first-nations-1.3122750>

Don Cayo: Taking land claims to court isn't always best for First Nations

Vancouver Sun June 24, 2015

Litigious First Nations may think they are on an unstoppable roll, and many other Canadians may agree, but neither the track record of court judgments nor the prospects for future legal victories are clear-cut, a new analysis argues.

The Supreme Court of Canada's groundbreaking Tsilhqot'in decision last year was perhaps "a sort of peak for aboriginal rights claims in the courts," writes Dwight Newman, a senior fellow at the Ottawa-based Macdonald-Laurier Institute, in a new paper.

As well, while the Tsilhqot'in decision was the first to affirm aboriginal title to traditional territory, it was far less sweeping than is generally assumed, Newman notes.

"Contrary to a lot of sensational commentary about the judgment, the Tsilhqot'in themselves were awarded only 40 per cent of their claim area, which was itself only five per cent of their traditional territory, meaning that the title area (is) two per cent of their traditional territory."

His study includes a two-page table that analyses a couple of dozen other notable judgments in similar terms — a nominal win or loss for the affected First Nation, but with contradictory implications. For example, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation case against the B.C. government in 2004 confirmed and strengthened an earlier decision involving the Haida that spelled out the duty of governments and project developers to consult First Nations, but the band lost the case anyway. Ditto for a case involving Rio Tinto Alcan and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council in 2010.

"It is as if each game in the Stanley Cup playoffs resulted in not just a win or a loss, but also in changed rules for all the remaining games," Newman observes.

He worries that the continuing uncertainty about what complicated court judgments mean and where they may go next will have a chill on resource development decisions. Projects could be cancelled as the negotiating positions of governments and First Nations are driven farther apart by unrealistic expectations, and some parties "may have incentives to generate rather than overcome uncertainties.

He also warns that First Nations may pay a hefty price if they try to overplay their hand.

"Canada may have reached a point where aboriginal groups might be setting back their own position by litigating," he writes.

"We have already seen cases of what might be described as overreach by First Nations, pushing for rights beyond those they can plausibly attain within the legal system. Overreach results in losses such as the 2014 Grassy Narrows (Ontario) decision, which affirmed the primary provincial role in resource development decisions and the possibility of provinces justifiably infringing on treaty rights."

The key question, of course, is what the various players in resource development decisions should do in the face of this uncertainty and these unrealistic expectations. On this issue — aside from his calls for governments to help small resource development companies navigate through the complexities imposed by the duty to consult, and for

provinces to consider putting forward reference cases that would push the courts to be more specific — Newman is a little vague.

His five recommendations boil down to a list of what various players “should” do. First Nations should figure out when it’s better to negotiate. Governments should be more upfront about what powers they have and how they will use them. Businesses should understand aboriginal issues more clearly. Courts should quit muddying the waters with vague pronouncements.

Well, of course they should. But what if they don’t? What’s a fair and workable Plan B?

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/Cayo+Taking+land+claims+court+always+best+First+Nations/11161266/story.html#ixzz3e5StUZOk>

Petronas agrees to conduct more studies on B.C. terminal’s impact

BRENT JANG

VANCOUVER — The Globe and Mail

Published Tuesday, Jun. 23, 2015 3:48PM EDT

Last updated Tuesday, Jun. 23, 2015 8:17PM EDT

Backers of a liquefied natural gas project near Prince Rupert are hoping a new phase of collaboration with First Nations will address concerns about the planned export terminal’s impact on salmon habitat.

Malaysia’s state-owned Petronas and its partners in Pacific NorthWest LNG have told the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) that they are committed to conducting further studies to forecast the project’s potential impact on Flora Bank, located next to the terminal site on Lelu Island. Flora Bank, an area visible at low tide, contains eelgrass used by juvenile salmon.

Petronas-led Pacific NorthWest LNG’s new consultations with First Nations come as the B.C. government announced Tuesday that it will recall the legislature on July 13 to debate legislation on the project-development agreement signed last month between the consortium and the province.

Mike de Jong, the government house leader and Finance Minister, said during a conference call that the legislation is geared to both ratify the pact with Pacific NorthWest LNG and enable future deals with other proponents.

The goal is to table the entire project-development agreement at the start of the rare summer session. “The intention is to ensure that there is proper statutory authority to sign this agreement, to give effect to this agreement with Pacific NorthWest and subsequent agreements that are similarly designed,” Mr. de Jong said.

He noted that Pacific NorthWest LNG has given its conditional approval to the project, subject to ratification in the provincial legislature and federal regulatory approval from CEAA.

“The province will continue to work with First Nations and the proponent as they work to achieve the highest environmental standards, including the protection and enhancement of the fish habitat,” the government added in a statement.

In May, members of the Lax Kw’alaams First Nation declined to provide aboriginal consent, rejecting Pacific NorthWest LNG’s \$1-billion cash offer over 40 years. The Lax Kw’alaams group is one of five Tsimshian First Nations consulted by Pacific NorthWest LNG as part of the environmental review process for the energy export proposal. Two groups, the Metlakatla and the Kitselas, signed impact-benefit agreements with the joint venture in December. Two others, the Kitsumkalum and Gitxaala, have not yet announced their decisions.

A Pacific NorthWest LNG-commissioned report prepared by engineering firm Stantec Inc. argues that there will be little to no environmental impact from building the terminal on Lelu Island, which has forested areas spread over bog deposits. The focus now is on examining measures to reduce any potential environmental harm, including plans to construct a suspension bridge over Flora Bank.

Pacific NorthWest LNG will be conducting further work aimed at “evaluating and assessing, in collaboration with governments and Tsimshian First Nations, the effects of the project on Skeena River salmon populations,” according to a recent letter sent to Pacific NorthWest LNG by Catherine Ponsford, CEAA’s project manager for the Pacific and Yukon region.

CEAA began its review into Pacific NorthWest LNG in April, 2013. Since then, there have been five pauses to what industry observers originally thought might be a process that would take two years at most. “The legislated timeline has been paused twice during the process of drafting and concluding the environmental assessment impact guidelines and three times due to information requests,” said CEAA, which temporarily halted its review on June 2 – day 263 of the 365-day process. It might take until October for CEAA to issue its final report, assuming the regulator restarts its assessment soon.

Pacific NorthWest LNG estimates that \$36-billion will need to be spent in order to achieve planned exports to Asia in 2019. The huge budget includes \$6.7-billion in two pipeline projects and \$11.4-billion for the export plant on Lelu Island. The two natural-gas pipelines are to be built by TransCanada Corp.

Petronas holds a 62-per-cent interest in Pacific NorthWest LNG. The partners with minority stakes are China's Sinopec, India's Indian Oil Corp. Ltd., Japan Petroleum Exploration, China Huadian Corp. and Petroleum Brunei.

Direct Link: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/bc-politicians-returning-to-legislature-to-tackle-lng-law-for-proposed-plant/article25078477/>

B.C., Tsilhqot'in to mark historic Supreme Court anniversary with five-year deal

By Dirk Meissner, THE CANADIAN PRESS June 24, 2015



Chief Joe Alphonse, tribal chairman of the Tsilhqot'in Nation, says of a recent ruling that gave his nation a land title: 'We've given them a sense that, yes, we do matter. We do have a say in your industry. Governments have to listen to us. We cannot be ignored any longer.'

VICTORIA - A horse-drawn wagon train carrying aboriginal youths and elders is slowly rolling and rumbling this week towards the Williams Lake Stampede from central British Columbia's Nemiah Valley.

It's an annual First Nations' rite of passage, but, this year's 200-kilometre trek over the wind-swept Chilcotin Plateau is different, says Tsilhqot'in Nation Chief Roger William, a former champion bull rider.

It falls on the one-year anniversary of the Supreme Court of Canada decision that granted to the Tsilhqot'in aboriginal title to more than 1,750 square kilometres of land in the Nemiah Valley, a mountainous area with pristine lakes, alpine valleys and amazingly, wild horses.

The June 26, 2014, decision was the first time a Canadian court declared aboriginal title to lands outside of a reserve, a ruling that's been labelled a game changer by legal experts, governments, investors and First Nations.

The history making is not over, though. William said he expects the seven Tsilhqot'in Nation chiefs to sign on Friday a five-year protocol with the B.C. government, setting the terms and goals for negotiating land, governance and resource agreements over the vast territory that encompasses much of central B.C.'s coastal mountain area.

"We've been across Canada since the title win, meeting companies, First Nations and governments," said William, who is chief of the Xeni Gwetin First Nation.

"We've met people like the James Bay Cree, the Haida Nation. We're looking at meeting the Nisga'a. We were up in the Yukon. We did updates with the Union of B.C. Municipalities."

During a gathering last year of 400 First Nations' leaders and Premier Christy Clark's Liberal cabinet, William said the court handed aboriginals a club. He said First Nations could use it to convince governments and others that they had to be included in decisions that concerned their lands and lives.

He said the Tsilhqot'in and the B.C. government have been talking for the past year and are now at a starting point where the First Nation can achieve its ultimate goal of territorial control.

"Hopefully, if we sign this five-year negotiating process we are really able to start really finishing off the title-land situation and looking at the whole Tsilhqot'in territory," William said. "We're looking at being involved in decision-making throughout the Chilcotin, involved in revenue sharing throughout the Chilcotin. All this is our vision."

John Rustad, B.C.'s aboriginal relations and reconciliation minister, said the government has tried to repair historic relations with the Tsilhqot'in and reach side agreements on land-use issues.

Last year, the government exonerated six Tsilhqot'in chiefs who were hanged during what is known as the 1864 Chilcotin War.

The war began after B.C.'s colonial government approved a toll road from Bute Inlet on the coast to Barkerville in the Cariboo gold fields. The Tsilhqot'in resisted, starting in April 1864, and within a month 19 road builders and a farmer were dead.

Rustad said the government and First Nation have also come to agreements on provincial campsites and guide-outfitter operations.

"We're optimistic by the anniversary we will have a protocol in place which will then map out what we will try to work towards over the next three to five years," he said. "The Tsilhqot'in would like that to happen and we'd like that to happen."

Rustad called the protocol a road map that guides both sides over the next few years.

"Everybody is trying to find their way through working with this," he said.

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Tsilhqot+mark+historic+Supreme+Court+anniversary+with+five/11162630/story.html#ixzz3e5U586Gm>

Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Mary Mickeyook, Inuk woman missing in Montreal, found in local hospital

60-year-old had no ID when she was admitted to Hôtel-Dieu with burned face

[CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 18, 2015 1:44 PM CT Last Updated: Jun 18, 2015 3:58 PM CT

Montreal police have confirmed that Mary Mickeyook, a 60-year-old woman from Kuujjuarapik, Que., who was reported missing, has been found at a local hospital.



Mary Mickeyook, 60, from Kuujjuarapik, Que., was found Thursday after going missing in Montreal late last week. (Facebook)

Police found Mickeyook at the Hôtel-Dieu hospital on Thursday morning. She had been admitted to the hospital without identification after being badly burned in a fire.

Mickeyook travelled to Montreal last week for medical treatment but did not show up for her scheduled surgery on June 12.

Alan Gull, an outreach worker with the Montreal Native Friendship Centre who works closely with the Montreal police on cases of missing aboriginal people, said Mickeyook's family was "extremely ecstatic" to hear she had been found.

"I was emotional myself, that's how happy I was," he said.

Her son-in-law Albert Mianscum says all her belongings including her bank card were found in her room at the Atwater YMCA where Nunavik patients stay while in Montreal for medical treatment.

Police say she was carrying no identification when she was admitted to Hôtel-Dieu. Her face was partially burned and she was not able to speak because of her injuries.

Police say her injuries are not life-threatening.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/mary-mickeyook-inuk-woman-missing-in-montreal-found-in-local-hospital-1.3119016>

Canadian aboriginal women four times more likely to be murdered, police say

Indigenous women make up 16% of homicide victims despite representing just 4.3% of Canada's population, Royal Canadian Mounted Police reports



Residential school survivor Patricia Tucknaow wipes away a tear while walking to honour residential school survivors in Vancouver. Photograph: Ben Nelms/Reuters

Reuters in Toronto

Friday 19 June 2015 22.02 BST Last modified on Friday 19 June 2015 22.54 BST

Aboriginal women are three or four times more likely to go missing or be murdered than non-native Canadian women, but the violence is typically at the hands of their family or community, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police said on Friday.

In a report that underscored the violence plaguing Canada's indigenous women, the RCMP defended its record in solving murder and missing persons cases involving aboriginals but said more work needed to be done to prevent crime in the community.

"The update confirms that aboriginal women are most often killed by men in their own homes, in their own communities, and reconfirms the need to target prevention efforts towards family violence," RCMP superintendent Tyler Bates told a news conference.

Canada's 1.4 million aboriginals have higher levels of poverty and a lower life expectancy than other Canadians, are plagued by addiction and family breakdown, and are more often victims of violent crime.

The federal police force said last year 1,017 aboriginal women had been murdered between 1980 and 2012, while another 108 were missing under suspicious circumstances.

In Friday's updated report, the RCMP said that while aboriginal women represent just 4.3% of Canada's female population, they represent 16% of female homicide victims and 11% of missing persons cases involving women.

"Aboriginal women continue to be overrepresented among Canada's missing and murdered women. And while I applaud the efforts of everyone who is working to lessen violence against aboriginal women, it is clear that much work remains to be done," said RCMP deputy commissioner Janice Armstrong.

The update noted that 11 more aboriginal women have gone missing since last year's report.

The Assembly of First Nations, an umbrella organization representing one of Canada's three distinct aboriginal groups, said the RCMP report is an "urgent call to action on a national crisis".

Many aboriginals have called for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, but the Conservative prime minister, Stephen Harper, has rebuffed them, saying the tragedies are about crime, not a "sociological phenomenon" requiring further study.

The RCMP also said its solution rate for homicides of aboriginal women was 88%, little different than its 89% solution rate for homicides involving non-native women.

Earlier in June, a six-year investigation found that the Canadian policy of forcibly separating aboriginal children from their families and sending them to residential schools amounted to cultural genocide that continues to reverberate through aboriginal society.

Direct Link: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/19/canada-aboriginal-women-murder-homicide-police>

Aboriginal women still overrepresented among Canada's missing and murdered women

32 aboriginal women have been slain and 11 more have disappeared since 2013, RCMP says

[CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 19, 2015 1:51 PM ET Last Updated: Jun 20, 2015 4:33 PM ET

Aboriginal women continue to be overrepresented among Canada's missing and murdered women, says the RCMP in a new report to update Canadians on the force's efforts to address unresolved cases of missing and murdered native women.

Between May 2014 when [last year's report](#) was published and April 2015, 11 more aboriginal women disappeared in regions over which the RCMP has jurisdiction.

Unlike in the previous report, this update did not take into account missing or murdered aboriginal woman from cities and municipalities with their own police forces, meaning the total number would be higher than the figure in the report.

It also found that within RCMP jurisdictions, 32 aboriginal women were killed in 2013 and 2014. The Mounties said this was "consistent with levels of the past decade."

The RCMP said the new report confirms what was found in 2014, mainly that aboriginal women are most frequently killed by someone they know, be it their spouse or a member of their community.



Aboriginal women are most frequently killed by someone they know, be it their spouse or another family member, says the RCMP in a new report made public Friday. (Darryl Dyck/Canadian Press)

"Our 2015 update confirms the unmistakable connection between homicide and family violence, and that aboriginal women continue to be over-represented among Canada's missing and murdered women," said RCMP Deputy Commissioner Janice Armstrong.

Other key findings include:

- As of April 2015, 174 aboriginal women across all police jurisdictions remain missing, 111 of these under suspicious circumstances.
- A reduction of 9.3 per cent in unsolved cases of missing and murdered aboriginal women reported in the 2014 overview, from 225 to 204 across all police jurisdictions.
- In 2013 and 2014, 81 per cent of murders of aboriginal women have been solved in RCMP jurisdictions.
- Within RCMP jurisdictions, offenders were known to their victims in 100 per cent of solved homicide cases of aboriginal women since 2013.
- Offenders were known to their victims in 93 per cent of solved homicide cases of non-aboriginal women in RCMP jurisdictions in 2013 and 2014.

Urgent call to action

The Assembly of First Nations said today's findings demand an "urgent call" for action.

"The numbers of missing and murdered indigenous women cannot remain a mere statistic," said AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde in a written statement.

"There is a significant and tragic overrepresentation of indigenous women among the missing and murdered in this country."

Reacting to the RCMP update on CBC News Network's *Power & Politics*, Liberal aboriginal affairs critic Carolyn Bennett called for an inquiry into the issue, saying that "crime prevention alone cannot stop the problem."

NDP aboriginal affairs critic Niki Ashton also called for an inquiry, saying "this is a Canadian issue, not an indigenous issue."

In a statement posted on her website, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women Kellie Leitch wrote that "we don't need another study on top of the same 40 studies that have already been done; we need police to catch those responsible and ensure they're punished."

Today's release follows a report last year that found [more than 1,000 cases](#) of murdered and missing indigenous women between 1980 and 2012.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/aboriginal-women-still-overrepresented-among-canada-s-missing-and-murdered-women-1.3120272>

Foundation puts families first in MMIW tragedies

By [Glen Dawkins](#), *Winnipeg Sun*

First posted: Saturday, June 20, 2015 07:33 PM CDT | Updated: Saturday, June 20, 2015 07:49 PM CDT



A celebration took place at The Forks in Winnipeg, to mark Aboriginal Day. This is junior girl's fancy dancing. Saturday, June 20, 2015. (Chris Procylo/Winnipeg Sun/Postmedia Network)

Often lost in the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls are the families left behind. That's what drew Karen Harper to become passionate about the Families First Foundation.

"Meeting with the families and hearing what they're sharing and seeing the pain, it can't help but touch your heart," Harper said of the initiative developed by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs last summer. "It can't help but make you want to get involved. Not to

give them answers. That's not what they want. They just want people to walk beside them, support them in whatever way they need."

Harper was one of the organizers of a blanket dance held Saturday on the front lawn of the University of Winnipeg as part of Aboriginal Day festivities. The gathering was followed by a march down Portage Avenue to The Forks where further Aboriginal Day events were being held. As part of the blanket dance, a large 10-panel blanket was carried by the marchers down Portage Avenue and into the Aboriginal Day pow wow at The Forks, to collect donations for Families First programs that support families of victims. It is the first fundraising effort by the Foundation.

"The biggest thing that the families have told us is that they are not being heard because what they want to see is a process that gives them supports: counselling, financial help, police accountability, and other areas," said Harper, a 61-year-old originally from Peguis First Nation.

The ceremony began with a sacred pipe ceremony presided over by AMC Grand Chief Derek Nepinak.

The march was led by Nepinak along with David James Taylor, a Mississauga Ojibway from Ontario who left Victoria in late March and is walking to Ottawa to raise awareness about the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women.

"Recognizing that we have to become more relevant in the day to day lives of people facing tragedy," Nepinak said. "It seems like we've been disconnected and when tragedy strikes nobody has been there for the families. Families First is really about putting families first and recognizing that we have to make greater efforts as a community to step up, stand together and start helping families get past some of these tragedies and begin the healing process."

In addition to helping the families, the foundation intends to engage the broader community, connecting with elders as well as the youth of the community, Harper said.

"It needs to be inclusive because that's who we are," he said. "We've always been a people of inclusiveness, togetherness. So we're engaging the elders, engaging the youth, and that's what the families said. We really need the voices of the youth as well."

"We have to keep in mind that the issue of missing and murdered women is not just an indigenous issue," provincial minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Eric Robinson added. "It's an issue for all of Canada to further understand. People will give you a political rant but that's not what this is all about. We're concerned about all people that are losing loved ones each and every day and this is an opportunity for us to greatly understand."

Direct Link: <http://www.winnipegsun.com/2015/06/20/foundation-puts-families-first-in-mmiw-tragedies>

Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women Must Start With a Public Inquiry

Posted: 06/21/2015 9:34 pm EDT Updated: 06/21/2015 9:59 pm EDT

[Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau](#)



As we unite on National Aboriginal Day, we reflect and celebrate the unique cultures, important contributions and the truly fundamental role First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples have played in building Canada and shaping our collective identity. It is important to use this moment to reflect on how we can move forward as a nation to create real reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, based on our shared values of compassion, cooperation and respect. It is a time to consider what kind of Canada we want to leave our children.

We must address the gap in outcomes for too many indigenous women in our country. As the Native Women's Association of Canada notes, First Nations, Métis and Inuit women are more likely to face significant barriers to attaining economic security in our country. They are more likely to live in poverty, face unemployment, lower paying jobs, or live in inadequate and unsafe housing. These inequalities touch not only women, but their entire families.

My heart breaks at the epidemic of violence perpetrated against thousands of indigenous women and girls -- including those that have gone missing or been murdered. I find it deeply troubling, particularly as a woman and the mother of a daughter. In the past 15 years, my volunteer work for women and children's well-being, and my most recent involvement with various aboriginal women's groups, has shown me that for many communities across Canada -- indigenous and non -- the problem of violence against women and girls is not abstract. It is one that shatters lives each and every day.

This tragedy involves all Canadians but how do we start to address it? We all know the numbers. We all recognize the problem. We need next to bring it from the head to the heart. Only then can we truly move forward.

Unlike our current Prime Minister, I agree with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, as well as with leaders from other orders of government, that ending the

violence must start with a national public inquiry into the ongoing tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

I agree that there needs to be a full national inquiry because it reflects Canada's core values of justice and fairness. I agree because it is my responsibility as a woman to defend the rights of women everywhere. I agree because only a full national public inquiry will ensure justice for the victims, healing for the families, while at the same time providing the country with a roadmap for how to break this cycle of violence. And I support an inquiry because, as a mother, I want my daughter and my sons to grow up in a country that doesn't just speak the language of equality and justice, but exercises it, openly and truthfully.

It is vital that the values of respect, unity, empathy, and compassion inform this process. These values are a core part of my own identity, informed by my upbringing, my family, and my connection to yoga -- the latter of which makes clear that no living thing thrives or suffers in isolation from other living things, that we are all one, and that respect for all living creatures depends on the recognition of the unity of all beings.

In life, you get out what you put in. We will not fully be able to reconcile and finally end this national problem until we are all willing to open our hearts and embrace one another. This is what it means to make others' lives a part of your own. That is the Canada our children deserve: one that moves forward, united by a sense of responsibility and a generosity of spirit.

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/sophie-gragoiretrudeau/national-aboriginal-day_b_7633212.html

Rachel Notley apologizes for residential school abuse

Alberta's premier added her voice to an inquiry for missing and murdered aboriginal women

[The Canadian Press](#)

June 22, 2015

EDMONTON – Premier Rachel Notley apologized Monday on behalf of Alberta to indigenous peoples for abuse in residential schools, and added her voice to an inquiry for missing and murdered aboriginal women.

“We want the First Nation, Metis and Inuit people of Alberta to know that we deeply regret the profound harm and damage that occurred to generations of children forced to attend residential schools,” said Notley in a speech to the house.

“Although the province did not establish this system, members of this chamber at the time did not take a stand against it.

“And for this silence, we apologize.”

In the gallery watching the speech were a number of invited guests of the premier, including residential school survivors.

Earlier this month, the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission detailed more than a century of institutionalized abuse of generations of aboriginal children in residential schools.

The report, based on interviews with thousands of survivors, detailed the plight of youngsters forcibly separated from their families to endure loneliness, cruelty and physical and mental abuse tantamount to “cultural genocide.”

The commission estimated more than 6,000 children, about one in 25, died in the residential schools, the last of which didn’t close until 1996.

The report made 94 recommendations to repair the bonds between the country and its founding peoples, including that Canada adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

“This past is too painful to endure on your own,” Notley told the survivors.

“In the journey of reconciliation you no longer have to walk alone.”

Notley also urged the federal government to convene an inquiry on missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Numerous provincial, national and international organizations, including a committee of the United Nations, have been calling for such an inquiry to shed light on the root causes for the disproportionately high number of indigenous women who are missing or have been murdered.

“With full conviction, we lend our voice and our conscience to doing right by the women, their families and their communities,” said Notley.

“The silence that once was, has long since passed.”

Last week, the RCMP reported that since 1980, there have been 1,049 murdered aboriginal women and another 175 have disappeared.

Police said most of the time, the women were killed by family members or men they knew.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government has resisted calls for an inquiry, saying more study is not needed and that steps are being taken to remedy the problems.

Direct Link: <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/rachel-notley-apologizes-to-indigenous-peoples-for-residential-school-abuse-2/>

Bells toll downtown to commemorate missing and murdered indigenous women



CTV Calgary Staff
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Canadians gathered in somber reflection on Sunday as the bells rang at Anglican cathedrals across the country to symbolize social injustices plaguing Canada's First Nation communities.

The bells tolled once for each missing or murdered indigenous woman in Canada.

The 1,181 tolls of the bells at the Cathedral Church of the Redeemer on 1 Street Southeast lasted for more than two hours.



A woman stands outside of the Cathedral Church of the Redeemer on 1 St SE with a sign explaining the bell tolls

“In the past, churches tolled bells for emergencies,” explained Ruth Parent, Rector’s warden of the cathedral. “We feel the missing and murdered aboriginal women is an emergency.”

“We recognize that ringing the bells is simply a gesture. It's not going to change what has happened. We simply want the family and friends to know that we are in solidarity with them.”

The bell-ringing marks the end of 22 days of prayer for reconciliation in connection to the tragic legacy of Canada’s residential school system. The Anglican Church was one of the administrative bodies of the system.

The family of 26-year-old Anthony Stevenson felt the impact of the residential school system.

“I’m the reason my mother got out of residential school,” said Stevenson. “She got pregnant with me and I took her out of there.”

While Stevenson would like to see increased action from government and police into the atrocities facing indigenous women, he appreciates the efforts of the church.

“At least they're spreading awareness,” said Stevenson. “Before, I don't think anyone would touch the subject.”

Direct Link: <http://calgary.ctvnews.ca/bells-toll-downtown-to-commemorate-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-1.2433530>

Pauktuutit: RCMP need Northern strategy to combat violence against women

National group representing Canada's Inuit women says RCMP report doesn't include Inuit-specific statistics

[CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 23, 2015 6:18 AM CT Last Updated: Jun 23, 2015 7:50 AM CT



Rebecca Kudloo, president of Pauktuutit, says that issues unique to the North mean that a unique approach is needed: 'In Baker Lake, it's been -50 quite a lot of times. How does a woman being abused get away and be safe with her kids at that temperature?' (Submitted by Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada)

Pauktuutit, a national non-profit organization representing Inuit women in Canada, says it wants to work with the RCMP to focus efforts to reduce violence and help missing and murdered indigenous women in the North.

Last Friday, [the RCMP released a 2015 update](#) to last year's report on missing and murdered indigenous women. In a news release, Pauktuutit says it commends the RCMP for their commitment to addressing the issue. However, it also points out that the report doesn't include data specific to Inuit.

"The RCMP provides police services for the majority of Inuit communities in Inuit Nunangat, and is open to working with Pauktuutit to analyze their data further with a focus on the North," reads the release.

Rebecca Kudloo, Pauktuutit's president, says the report also underscores the need for more programs and services to reduce family violence, something that needs to be specifically tuned to unique needs in Northern communities.

"There is a lack of shelters in Inuit Nunangat," she says. "In Baker Lake, it's been -50 quite a lot of times. How does a woman being abused get away and be safe with her kids at that temperature?"

"Those are realities in the North. We need Inuit specific programs that suit us, and that [are] going to help us for the future."

In the release, Pauktuutit also suggests Inuit communities take advantage of the RCMP's Family Violence Prevention Initiative. Under the Initiative, non-profit organizations and hamlets could receive up to \$25,000 for projects designed to reduce family violence.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/pauktuutit-rcmp-need-northern-strategy-to-combat-violence-against-women-1.3123924>

Acquaintances kill more aboriginal women than spouses, report shows

By Betty Ann Adam, The Starphoenix June 23, 2015

Missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW) are more likely to be killed by acquaintances and strangers than are non-aboriginal women, the RCMP's recently updated report on the subject found. The report's findings have been widely misinterpreted to suggest the problem of MMIW lies mainly with aboriginal men, Senator Lillian Dyck told a Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission conference on Monday.

Mainstream Canadians can't use the report to deny their share of responsibility for the problem, she said.

"It's not just your own family or your spouse.

Acquaintances makes it a broader issue. An acquaintance could be a nonaboriginal man. That captures the wider Canadian public, and not just focusing on aboriginal families and on-reserve communities ... (on) blame the victim," Dyck said in an interview.

The report found more aboriginal women were killed by acquaintances (30 per cent) than by their spouses (29 per cent).

Among non-aboriginal victims, 19 per cent were killed by acquaintances and 41 per cent by spouses.

That difference was hidden in the report, which grouped acquaintances with spouses, other family and other intimates to show that more than 90 per cent of all female victims had "a previous relationship" with their killers.

The report includes no data about the ethnicity of any of the killers - particularly about the 30 per cent who fall into the acquaintance category, she noted. Dyck dug further into the report and found 17 per cent of aboriginal women's killers were casual acquaintances, compared to nine per cent of non-aboriginal victims' killers.

The findings show aboriginal women are at greater risk of being killed by people who don't know them well than are non-aboriginal women.

It means addressing family violence, while important, ignores the main difference between the murders of aboriginal and non-aboriginal women, she said.

She referred to Amnesty International's 2014 statement that characterizing threats to indigenous women's lives as exclusively about domestic violence misrepresents the issue and obscures crucial aspects of the threats.

"I feel like we have to keep proving that there is a problem. When they throw these things out ... maybe it's a diversionary tactic. (We're) constantly having to overcome the denial that there is a problem," Dyck said.

It's important to challenge the claim that family violence is the main factor in the murders of aboriginal women because the evidence is questionable and it reinforces negative stereotypes about aboriginal people, she added.

Contrary to some news reports, the RCMP report does not confirm Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Development Canada Bernard Valcourt's claim that aboriginal men are responsible for 70 per cent of cases of missing and murdered indigenous women, Dyck said.

She pulled quotations from the 2014 RCMP report that acknowledged it is challenging to collect information about aboriginal identity because it can lend itself to perception-based assessments by police, because the term is not always defined the same way across jurisdictions, and because of inconsistent collection and sharing of information among police organizations.

"The RCMP know that their data on racial identity is subjective, open to interpretation, not rigorous and incomplete. At best, their data on race are indicative but certainly not reliable," she said.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/Acquaintances+kill+more+aboriginal+women+than+spouses+report+shows/11159130/story.html>

Bells ring at St Aidan Church for missing and murdered Aboriginal women

Published on June 22, 2015

Acknowledging their role in residential schools, bell ringing took place in recent weeks at St. Aidan Church in Moose Jaw to also recognize the number of missing and murdered Aboriginal Women in Canada.



St. Aidan Church in Moose Jaw rang their bell 51 times for the last 22 days to remember the 1,181 missing and murdered Aboriginal Women in Canada.

The bells rang 51 times a day for the last 22 days in recognition of the 1,181 women. A total of over 560 Anglican churches in Canada took part in the action, from Newfoundland to British Columbia to a church in the Yukon.

“It was important to recognize that and to bring it to people’s attention,” said the Rev.-Deacon Arleen Champion.

The national Anglican Church of Canada was inspired by the truth and reconciliation report about the residential school issue, released recently, leading up into National Aboriginal Day.

“Some people took a day a week and rang the bells each week for that,” said Champion. “We decided to divide it up and ring 51 times for 22 days.”

The decision was made to remember the women – and the church’s role in residential schools.

“We were... just acknowledging the Anglican Church of Canada was part of that,” she said. “We’ve been very up front with that from the beginning.”

In 1993, then-Primate Michael Peers, the head of the Anglican Church in Canada, issued an apology in 11 languages – French, English and nine First Nations languages — to the National Native Convocation in Minaki, Ont.

“I am sorry, more than I can say, that we tried to remake you in our image, taking from you your language and the signs of your identity,” Peers said, according to the website Anglican.ca/relationships/policy. “I am sorry, more than I can say, that in our schools so many were abused physically, sexually, culturally and emotionally.”

Between 1820 and 1969, the Anglicans administered three dozen residential schools and hostels. At its peak the number was 24 that were concurrently.

Direct Link: <http://www.mjtimes.sk.ca/News/Local/2015-06-22/article-4190891/Bells-ring-at-St-Aidan-Church-for-missing-and-murdered-Aboriginal-women%0D%0A%26nbsp%3B/1>

Special Topic: Residential Schools & ‘60s Scoop

Full Text: Apology to First Nation, Métis and Inuit Survivors of the Sixties Scoop from the government of Manitoba

[National News](#) | June 19, 2015 by [APTN National News](#)



Thank you Mr. Speaker, elders, survivors, guests, and members of this chamber, I am humbled today to speak about a tragedy widely known as the “Sixties Scoop”. This wide-scale, national apprehension of Indigenous children by child-welfare agencies removed thousands of children from their families and communities.

Je me présente avec humilité aujourd’hui pour parler de la tragédie connue sous le nom “Sixties Scoop”. Cette appréhension à échelle nationale d’enfants autochtones par notre système social a enlevé des milliers d’enfants de leur familles et de leur communautés.

These children were placed in Non-Aboriginal homes across Canada, the United States and even overseas. While some adoptive families took steps to provide culturally appropriate supports to adopted children, the Sixties Scoop is recognized as a practice of forced assimilation, and one that extended well beyond the 1960s.

There is not an Indigenous person in this country who has not been affected by the residential schools legacy, and the number of Indigenous people affected by the Sixties Scoop is also very large.

Across Canada, the number of adoptees is estimated to exceed 20,000 First Nation, Métis and Inuit children. By separating these children from their families, they were stripped of their culture, language and traditions.

Judge Edwin Kimelman the author of the 1985 report “No Quiet Place” on the child welfare system and how it affected Aboriginal people described the Sixties Scoop as “cultural genocide” – the very term that Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin and Commissioner Murray Sinclair used to describe the residential schools system. It is important that we acknowledge and appreciate the meaning of that description.

The reality is that, like the Residential Schools, the effects of the Sixties Scoop remain with us today. The human impact on families and communities are profound and cannot be easily reconciled.

The Sixties Scoop must now be recognized for the harm it caused and continues to cause. Many of the adoptees experienced profound shocks as they lost their heritage, language, families and their identity. Many of those who later returned to their communities as adults found it equally challenging trying to rebuild their relationships and connect with their culture.

Today, as Premier, I would like to apologize on behalf of the Province of Manitoba for the Sixties Scoop – the practice of removing First Nation, Métis and Inuit children from their families and placing them for adoption in non-Indigenous homes, sometimes far from their home community and for the losses of culture and identity to the children and their families and communities.

Comme premier ministre, je prends cette occasion pour présenter une excuse officielle de la part de la province du Manitoba pour le Sixties Scoop- l’enlèvement d’enfants des Premières nations, Métis et Inuit de leur familles et leur placement dans des familles adoptives non-autochtones, parfois très loin de chez eux; pour la perte de culture et d’identité- celle des enfants et de leur familles et communautés.

It was a practice that has left intergenerational scars and cultural loss. With these words of apology and regret, I hope that all Canadians will join me in recognizing this historic injustice. I hope they will join me in acknowledging the pain and suffering of the thousands of children who were taken from their homes.

By recognizing these difficult truths, I hope that we can join together down a new path of reconciliation, healing and cooperation. There is a long road ahead of us. It takes time to heal great pain. But I stand here, on behalf of the Manitoba government, committed to doing our part in the reconciliation process.

Last year the Province, led by the Deputy Premier and Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, held a two-day roundtable with Sixties Scoop survivors to discuss their stories and put forward an action plan. This Roundtable was the first time in Canada that such a gathering was hosted by a government.

Days later on behalf of the province Colleen Rajotte, herself a Sixties Scoop survivor, and Chief Francine Meeches of Swan Lake First Nation presented to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission final National Event on the Sixties Scoop.

Then in April of this year, on behalf of the provincial government, Colleen Rajotte and Leah Gazan spoke about the impact of the Sixties Scoop on First Nations, Inuit and Métis children at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

These actions brought much needed attention to this important issue. But still, much more needs to be done to assist Sixties Scoop survivors.

This week, the Manitoba government opened adoption records to ensure they are more accessible to survivors of the Sixties Scoop along with other adoptees. The records help adoptees and birth parents connect with each other giving access to birth certificates, adoption documents and other information that had previously been kept confidential.

We believe that all children have the right to know who their birth family is, particularly those who were part of the “60s scoop generation” and for those individuals seeking information important to identifying First Nation, Métis or Inuit heritage. There has been a great deal of interest from Adoptees along with birth parents.

Acknowledging the Sixties Scoop’s legacy as well as opening adoption records are very important steps forward on the road to reconciliation. However, we know that there will be many challenges for those who discover their family origins and we want to assist them.

Today, governments across the country are reviewing the Calls to Action and Summary Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Manitoba has started on many of the recommendations in the areas of Education, Family Services, Justice and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Children. We are using the report as a guidepost for further action.

Under the leadership of Manitoba’s Deputy Premier and Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, the Canadian Ministers Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and National Aboriginal Leaders have advocated for the Sixties Scoop and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Children to be addressed at a national level.

As Justice Sinclair has said, “an apology without a change in behaviour is meaningless and all levels of government need to admit their responsibility.”

We have made progress on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Children. All Canadian Provinces now support a national inquiry on this issue and have committed to holding another national roundtable within two years. We now want to see national recognition brought to the Sixties Scoop, and today, we commit to raising this important issue at the next national roundtable.

We also know that education about the Sixties Scoop and its impact on First Nation, Métis and Inuit children needs to be part of education curriculums across the country. In Manitoba we will be doing exactly that.

In closing, I would like to once again apologize, on behalf of the Province, to the innocent children and their families for this practice that in the words of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission removed thousands of Aboriginal children from their families and communities and placed them in non-Aboriginal homes without taking steps to preserve their culture and identity.

We look forward to further leadership on residential schools and the sixties scoop from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission this fall in their final report.

Ekosani, Miigwech, Mahseecho, Mutna, Wopida, Hei Hei, merci and thank you Mr Speaker.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/06/19/full-text-apology-first-nation-metis-inuit-survivors-sixties-scoop/>

The TRC and our long, humble road to decolonization

By: [Stephan Walke](#) | June 22, 2015

The end of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission marks no conclusion, but calls all Canadians to accept the challenge of confronting cultural difference and relearning their histories.



Laura Tabac, a Dene woman, is supported during her testimony at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission event in Inuvik in 2011, where she shared her residential school experience and how it affected her life. Approximately 150,000 Aboriginal children were subjected to residential schools, including thousands in Labrador and Newfoundland. Photo by [Michael Swan](#).

On June 3, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) came to a close in Ottawa. The process involved 6,750 witness statements recorded over 1,355 hours, which culminated in a six-volume report.

Despite the press and publicity and nods of agreement from coast to coast, Stephen Harper has so far been unable to get his mouth around the term “cultural genocide”. With the continued push for industrial development on Aboriginal land without proper consultation and failing policies to truly support the social needs of a fast-growing Indigenous population, this government is firmly upholding a colonial legacy. While such landmark moments as the Tsilhqot’in [supreme court ruling](#) and the TRC report indicate great steps, the government’s wish [“to divest itself of its legal and financial obligations to Aboriginal people and gain control over land and resources”](#) is still pervasive.

In a [recent interview](#) with the CBC, long-time activist and Aboriginal singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie responded with a shake of her head when asked about Stephen Harper’s approach to the whole affair.

“He’s not there yet,” she said. “I don’t think he knows ... I think he’s living in a different world.”

This simple statement brings up a very important point which eludes so many of us who grew up in a position of privilege. It is possible to be in the same place and living “in a different world”. Even if my property borders on a reserve or I have Aboriginal coworkers or I walk by a Friendship Center every day, my reality is not a shared reality until I humble myself to the meaning of cultural difference. Then I may be able to not just hear, but listen to stories and grapple with the fact that historical colonialism has bred present colonialism.

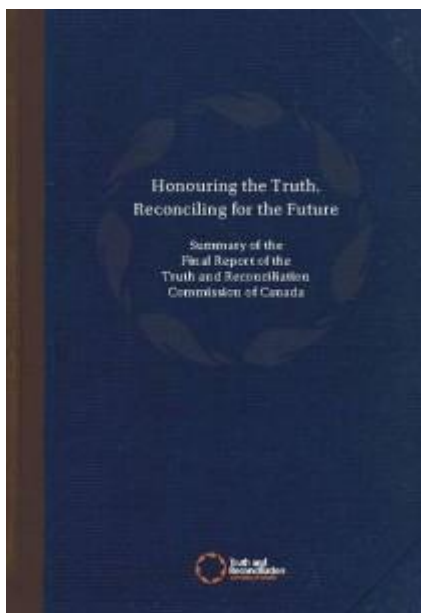
One particular incident comes to mind which may illustrate my point about cultural ignorance.

A group of choir members at a small town community choir were having a discussion about residential schools after practice one evening. One fellow was a British immigrant and was having a hard time understanding what the big deal was. He described going to boarding school in England as a child and witnessing many of the same atrocities described in accounts of residential schools here: the withdrawal from family, discipline and degradation, various forms of abuse. No great to-do is made in England about such patriarchal systems of schooling and conformity. He can understand it was wrong, and learned to triumph over these evils. Why the issue here?

This account is a clear demonstration of cultural blindness. No ill-intent is behind this man's understanding (or rather misunderstanding). What must be realized is that his inability to truly see the existing circumstances contribute to ongoing destructive colonialism which can only act to perpetuate a cultural gap and social inequality. In this man's case, we see a boy being sent (not taken) from his English home where he speaks the English language to English parents in order to be educated and disciplined in a similar manner to all his peers and his father and grandfather before him. This is in no way comparable to the systematic dismantling of Indigenous culture which took place in residential schools here and around the colonized world.

Residential schools a tool of colonization

The TRC clearly recognizes current discrepancies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians in terms of healthcare, childcare, education, legal systems, land rights and many other socio-political factors. Most importantly the report recognizes how these factors are connected to an “intergenerational legacy of residential schools.”



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report is being widely heralded as necessary reading for all Canadians.

The residential schools were a systemic tool of colonization acting in concert with many other government policies and discriminatory private and public practices such as unacknowledged treaty agreements and land acquisition and development without consultation.

No doubt, the means of education and discipline in many English boarding schools are also systemic in that they are directing a social order through very specific, albeit questionable, means. However, this system is inherently different from Indigenous residential schools in that its intent and effects act towards the sustenance of particular cultural and social norms, *not* to annihilate an entire way of life and way of looking and being in this world exhibited by culturally distinct and politically and economically subordinate peoples.

When asked to walk in someone else's shoes, we make no headway in simply picturing ourselves putting on a pair of moccasins and going for a stroll. We must truly challenge ourselves. This means questioning our beliefs, preconceptions, moral understandings, and institutional structures which we take for granted as ways of life. We have to listen to the stories emerging from the TRC with a mirror close at hand and judgement left at the door. If we do not make ourselves vulnerable by admitting that ours is not the only way, we easily run the risk of turning off the TV or radio and saying, "Oh my, isn't it horrible what they did to those kids," and dumping the plethora of issues into the pity bin with all the other terrible things happening "over there" or "back then".

The old "forgive and forget" mantra is not applicable here simply because this isn't a past issue. It's been centuries in the making and it permeates the current social and political make-up of not only this country, but the whole colonized world—something the TRC report duly acknowledges. On this note, if the choir member in my anecdote was Irish, his case would be vastly different. To misunderstand the circumstances and our place within them acts to keep the colonial beasts well-fed and actively guarding any road to social equality.

It's not enough to throw our hands up and exclaim, "I said 'I'm sorry' already!" Yes, the official apology for residential schools surfaced in 2008. This apology was necessary and sets a precedent, but, as the TRC report states, the hope of reconciliation "has faded". It is meaningless unless action follows which demonstrates the hard road is being walked by Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples together. Thankfully, people *are* walking this road together. The Idle-No-More movement, which is now a [global grass-roots movement](#), exemplifies a surge in a collective desire to heal and bring justice.

“Missing the point”

On the other hand, how our government is dealing with the issue demonstrates that our political and social institutions are missing the point. Newfoundland and Labrador was

not included in the *Residential School Settlement Act*, just as survivors of similar abuses in day schools and victims of the “Sixties Scoop” were exempt on technicality as well.

With the terms of union between Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador conveniently omitting any mention of First Nations, the Indigenous peoples of this province know all too well how such exclusionary technicalities act to undermine any genuine process of reconciliation and hope for self-governance and fair land rights settlements.



Former MP, cabinet minister and N.L. Lieutenant Governor John Crosbie apologizes for his inaction on residential schools as a Canadian politician. “Rally for Reconciliation”, St. John’s. June 9, 2015. *Photo by Justin Brake.*

You’re right Buffy, Harper isn’t “there yet”. But the fact is, neither are many of us. For a case-in-point, former prominent politician John Crosbie revealed his ignorance when he stepped up to the mic at a recent rally by Confederation Building to support the inclusion of Newfoundland and Labrador in the *Residential School Settlement Act*. Crosbie first apologized for his inaction when he was in a place of political power (thanks for the acknowledgement John, that’s the first step and I’ll applaud that). He then proceeded to admit he had no idea what he could do to help.

We are now faced with getting to work on what the TRC report calls “post apology progress”. The process of reconciliation has only just begun. We have to recognize it’s not enough to just *hear*. As Commissioner Marie Wilson notes, we have to enter [“not as observers. It is not a passive activity. It’s a very engaged activity.”](#)

In order for true reparations to happen and for policies to develop which act towards mutual respect and opportunities at the negotiating table, I believe that reconciliation should be pursued collectively while also being demanded of our political and social institutions. In the words of the TRC report, “there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.”

Context is crucial.

- See more at: <http://theindependent.ca/2015/06/22/the-trc-and-our-long-humble-road-to-decolonization/#sthash.4AN6ghpF.dpuf>

No reconciliation for N.L. residential school survivors, yet

By: [Justin Brake](#) | June 19, 2015

As mediation talks continue in a class action lawsuit against the Government of Canada for its failure to recognize and take responsibility for N.L. residential school survivors, observers say the recently released Truth and Reconciliation report offers people in this province and across Canada an opportunity to pursue a meaningful course of action to repair the relationship between settlers and Indigenous Peoples.



At the June 9 "Rally for Reconciliation" in St. John's, Inuit Elder Sarah Aggek shared a story from her time at a residential school in Labrador that still lives with her today. Photo by Justin Brake.

Mediation talks between lawyers representing victims of residential schools in Labrador and Newfoundland and the Government of Canada will resume next month in St. John's.

After an initial round of discussions last week, "it was decided that lawyers from all sides would meet again on July 21 and 22 so that the lawyers for the federal and provincial governments can obtain instructions from their clients about settlements," said Cathy Crosbie, a spokesperson for St. John's law firm Ches Crosbie Barristers, which is leading a class action lawsuit against the federal government for omitting residential school victims and their families in this province from an apology and compensation plan offered by Canada in 2008.

"It's possible that they could reach a settlement agreement July 21 or 22, but if it doesn't succeed and the claims do not settle at that time, trial will start on Sept. 28," Crosbie said.

Labrador and Newfoundland victims and survivors left out

Last week's mediation talks came one week after the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (TRC) released its [report](#), following six years of information-gathering, including nearly 7,000 statements from witnesses and 1,355 hours of recorded testimony. The negotiations also coincided with a "Rally for Reconciliation" on Confederation Hill, where residential school survivors, their families, allies and government representatives joined in a call for Canada to recognize, apologize to, and compensate survivors from this province.

In Labrador and Newfoundland Inuit, Innu and Mi'kmaq children were taken from their families and put in residential schools run by the Moravian Church and the International Grenfell Association, where they were stripped of their language and culture and in many cases physically and sexually abused. Around 1,000 survivors are included in the current class action, though it is assumed thousands more were subjected to brutal treatment over the century or so the schools operated.

When Prime Minister Stephen Harper stood in the House of Commons in 2008 to issue an [apology](#) to the 150,000 victims and survivors of Canada's residential school system and launch the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he didn't include those who attended this province's six residential schools since, the federal government has argued, Newfoundland was not a part of Canada when the schools began operating.

Canada's apology, its compensation to residential school survivors, and the launch of the TRC were conditions of the 2006 [Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement](#), the largest class action settlement in Canadian history.

The TRC report details 94 ["calls to action"](#) targeted at various levels of government and Aboriginal groups. The implementation of these recommendations has been widely heralded as a necessary step toward reconciliation with residential school survivors and their families and communities.

Residential schools legacy lives on

Most of the speakers at last week's rally called on the Harper Government to act on the recommendations in the TRC report that fall under federal jurisdiction, in particular the 29th, which calls on "the parties and, in particular, the federal government, to work collaboratively with plaintiffs not included in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to have disputed legal issues determined expeditiously on an agreed set of facts."

Standing on the steps of Confederation Building, Patricia Ford, Nunatsiavut's Ordinary Member for the Consituency of Canada, told the crowd that "there can never be true reconciliation while some survivors of residential schools in Canada are left out of any settlements, recognition and apologies from the federal government."

In order to achieve reconciliation in this province, governments, churches and those responsible for the abuse perpetrated through residential schools "must acknowledge their

history and the truth, as evil and deplorable as it may be,” NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) President Todd Russell said in a statement read by NCC member Regan Burden. “They must repent for what they have done and atone for the wrongs that they have committed.”

Sarah Aggek, an Inuit Elder, took her turn standing before the crowd and shared one painful memory that still lives with her today.

“I need to tell what happened when I was going to residential school,” she said. “When we were having supper — soup — I got kind of sick and threw up in my bowl and they made me eat it. That’s why today I don’t like carrots and turnip,” she recalled.

The survivors represented in the current class action [lawsuit](#) attended either the Lockwood residential school in Cartwright, the Yale school in North West River, or others in Nain, Makkovik and St. Anthony.



Liberal MHA for Torngat Mountains Randy Edmunds said children who returned to Hopedale from residential schools were “unapproachable”. *Photo by Justin Brake.*

At the rally Liberal MHA for Torngat Mountains Randy Edmunds said there was at least one other residential school, in Muddy Bay, Labrador, that is not included in the lawsuit. He said it burned down years ago.

Edmunds grew up in the Inuit communities of Hopedale and Makkovik in the 1970s, and because his two older sisters, his parents and grandmother all attended residential schools, he’s no stranger to the impacts the schools had, he said.

“I remember growing up in Hopedale...and remember the kids going out on the harbour in January with tears in their eyes getting back on board the plane. And when they came back, to us younger kids they were different, they were unapproachable,” he recounted. “And we resented them. It was only years after that we realized the pain and the suffering that they went through every time that plane showed up.”

St. John’s Native Friendship Centre (SJNFC) Executive Director Natasha McDonald told the crowd at the rally the residential schools aren’t just a thing of the past — they live on today as one of the many persistent effects of colonialism.

“I was taught by an Aboriginal elder that what affects one within the circle affects all within the circle,” she said. “The effects of the experiences of survivors is still being felt by them, their children, their grandchildren, their nieces, their nephews and their communities. The effects of residential boarding schools are also felt by all people of Aboriginal descent across the province, including the Innu, the Inuit, the Mi’kmaq and the [people of] NunatuKavut.”

Amelia Reimer, a cultural support worker with the SJNFC, said the six noted residential schools were not the only way violence was perpetrated against Aboriginal children and their families in Newfoundland and Labrador.

In addition to residential schools, where children were typically shipped off for weeks, months, and even a year at a time, she has also heard from many in the province about “day schools”, where children were still getting “the same indoctrination, the same sort of ‘education’ of learning English, forgetting your own language, your own culture — being removed from everything,” she said, “except you were still able to go home each night.

“A lot of the Mi’kmaq communities have talked to me about going to ‘regular’ school, but still at regular school being shamed out of their identity, being shamed out of their background. But there were Mi’kmaq people sent to residential schools as well, and some of them were called ‘orphanages’, that they were sent to. I’ve heard from [Innu] people at Sheshatshiu who were sent to [Mount Cashel](#) and [Belvedere](#). And I’ve talked to people from Corner Brook, Flat Bay, Bay St. George’s area who were sent to other orphanages even though they were not orphans — another way to be removed from their families and cultures.”

The most modern version of the residential schools of course is the foster care system, once again [seeing children] being removed from families and communities and being raised by people not of your family, not of your community, and being taught everywhere you came from was bad. — Amelia Reimer, cultural support worker

Margaret Cranford, a Mi’kmaq woman from the Island’s west coast who now lives in St. John’s, said she remembers stories her grandmother told of the times government workers would come to her door collecting information.

“When census came to her door she was pregnant and she had one son standing by her, and they asked her how many children she had and she said ‘one’ for fear that they would be shipped away,” Cranford recalled. “She actually had 11 children, and she died giving birth to the twelfth. She was 42.”

Reimer said the abuse inflicted upon the Aboriginal Peoples of Newfoundland and Labrador has created a legacy of intergenerational trauma that exists today and is a big part of the reason Innu, Inuit and Mi’kmaq communities struggle with grave social problems.

“People are still being hurt today,” she said. “Some of it is intergenerational violence; the trauma happened and it gets passed down, and the reactions and the coping skills to this trauma gets passed down, whether it be looking for solace in alcohol or substances, whether it be learning to abuse people — domestic violence, child abuse.”

Reimer also said the current problem of Aboriginal children being taken from their homes and put into foster care has its roots in the consequences of residential schools and other forms of colonial violence perpetrated against the Innu, Inuit and Mi’kmaq.

“The most modern version of the residential schools of course is the foster care system, once again [seeing children] being removed from families and communities and being raised by people not of your family, not of your community, and being taught everywhere you came from was bad,” she said.

While various speakers at the Rally for Reconciliation called on the federal government to lead the way in adopting the 94 calls to action, the focus was largely on reaching an agreement with the lawyers representing the residential school victims and survivors of this province.

In his statement, Todd Russell said the survivors here “have not had an opportunity to tell their stories and to begin that [healing] journey.

“This revictimization must stop. The legal squabbling must stop. And a settlement must be reached so the healing and the reconciliation can truly begin. There is a better way and it is for governments and all people in Canada to walk with us on a journey of healing and reconciliation.

Dinah Andersen, an Inuk from Nain who introduced herself as a “survivor of a survivor,” said she attended the rally to “speak on behalf of the many children who are unable to be here.

“Many have passed on, many are still struggling with the reality of their horrific experiences. I am one of the lucky ones — I did not endure as much hardship as many of my people.

“We must remember and honour the children as Canada honours the fallen soldiers,” she continued. “The iconic words ‘Lest we Forget’ can be a model to remember the survivors of residential schools of this province of ours.”

TRC Chair, Justice Murray Sinclair, has said in recent media interviews that there are 6,000 documented deaths of children while in the care of residential schools across Canada, and that the number is likely higher since thousands of documents have been destroyed.

The odds of a child dying in a residential school were 1 in 25, it has been widely reported since the TRC report's release, while the odds of a Canadian soldier dying in World War II were 1 in 26.

Politicians respond to report

In 2012 Canada endorsed the United Nations' *Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* but has been widely criticized for its refusal to implement the provisions of the declaration.

Following a nine-day visit to Canada in 2013, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples James Anaya called the reality faced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada a "crisis", saying the steps taken by governments are "insufficient, and have yet to fully respond to aboriginal peoples' urgent needs, fully protect their aboriginal and treaty rights, or to secure relationships based on mutual trust and common purpose."

While politicians at last week's rally in St. John's, including those from Labrador, joined in calling on the federal government to settle with the residential school survivors from this province and to adopt the 94 calls to action outlined in the TRC report, they were vague on what their parties would do within the provincial government to address the 28 calls to action that are in part or entirely under provincial jurisdiction.

"I'm happy to say the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has moved forward on reconciliation since 2004. Much has been done but much more remains to be done," said Keith Russell, provincial Minister of Aboriginal and Labrador Affairs. "We are committed to enhancing our relationship with all Aboriginal people in our province."

Asked if the government would adopt and implement the UN *Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation—which is call to action number 43 in the TRC report—the minister said the report is "hundreds of pages long with 94 recommendations," and that the government is "in the process of evaluating each and every one, and then of course we'll make our decisions accordingly."



A crowd looks on as politicians call on the Canadian government to adopt the calls to action in the TRC report and to recognize the residential school victims and survivors from Labrador and Newfoundland.

Photo by Justin Brake.

Russell said the public can expect an update from the provincial government “in the near future.”

Meanwhile, Edmunds, Liberal critic for Aboriginal and Labrador Affairs, reiterated his party’s support for the plaintiffs in the class action lawsuit and in a follow-up interview with *The Independent* said if a settlement is reached in the class action, “hopefully there won’t be any need for further action.”

Edmunds said the UN *Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* is “something that we all support,” but did not say whether the Liberal Party would adopt and implement it in this province if the it forms the next government.

NDP Aboriginal and Labrador Affairs critic Lorraine Michael told the crowd at the rally that following the calls to action outlined in the TRC report will be a necessary step to addressing the cycle of intergenerational trauma and repair the province’s relationship with Aboriginal Peoples here.

“We have to put in place all of the protections that are needed for the current children to stop the cycle,” she said. “We will never stop it if we don’t take seriously the report and the calls to action that are in that report.

“We need two things,” she continued. “We need a commitment on all levels to work together on the 94 calls to action, and we definitely need a settlement for the Aboriginal people in this province, and a settlement that comes not by dragging their stories through the courts, not by dragging their experiences through the court — but by the way that they know best, and that is by mediation, sitting down, working it out.”

At the federal level, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has remained silent on the TRC report.

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau said in a statement on June 2, the same day the 386-page report was released, “I affirm our unwavering support for the TRC’s recommendations, and call on the Government of Canada to take immediate action to implement them,” adding that “as leaders and legislators, we have a responsibility to act.

“The truth of what occurred has been established. Now we must all commit to the important work of reconciliation going forward.”

On the same day, NDP leader Tom Mulcair issued a statement saying the federal government “must act immediately in the areas of education, child protection and health care in order to put an end to the inequalities and sorry legacy of residential schools,” but did not commit to the full implementation of the TRC report’s 94 calls to action should the NDP form government in this fall’s election.

“We are determined to act upon the report of the Commission,” he continued. “We will consult with Indigenous people and establish which of the recommendations require the most pressing attention.”

In an interview with *The Independent*, St. John’s South—Mount Pearl MP Ryan Cleary said the NDP was being more pragmatic in not committing to the full implementation of all 94 recommendations, and that the Trudeau Liberals couldn’t realistically adopt and implement the calls to action since about one-third of them require the cooperation and action of provincial and municipal governments.

Cleary said the NDP is working to determine which of the calls to action are priorities.

“In terms of immediate action, areas like education, child welfare, health services — we need to take immediate action on these critical areas first so that the legacy of the residential schools ends now,” he said. “We’ve got to start healing this relationship, as Tom [Mulcair] has said, on a nation to nation basis.”

On June 2, the same day the TRC report was released, Cleary tabled a private members’ bill in the House of Commons that would make June 1 each year a national day to recognize the victims of clergy abuse, an act that if passed will contribute to Canada’s reconciliation efforts with Aboriginal Peoples, he said.

“It’s the start of something. Right at the start of that bill it mentions residential schools and Aboriginal Peoples, [and] we had the support of a whole whack of people on that one.”

Both the federal NDP and Liberals have vowed to make the problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women an election issue this year. The prime minister has repeatedly denied the call by Indigenous groups, premiers and opposition parties, telling CBC’s Peter Mansbridge last December that the matter “isn’t really high on our radar to be honest.”

The TRC report’s 41st call to action prescribes a public inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, of which part of the inquiry’s mandate would include identifying “links to the intergenerational legacy of residential schools.”

The ugly truth that must accompany reconciliation

In spite of Canadian politicians’ commitments to respect the TRC report, many Indigenous leaders, allies and critics are skeptical that adequate meaningful action will be taken to follow through on the promises, a necessary step, some [have said](#), in facilitating a process of decolonization in Canada. (The term decolonization doesn’t mean that all settlers must leave the country; click [here](#) to read more about the concept.)

Many have also criticized the TRC report for not going far enough in naming the actions and consequences of residential schools “cultural genocide”.



“These children didn’t die from smallpox or some other series of unfortunate and unpreventable events in those schools. Nutritional tests and medical experimentations were done on these children only to be denied to benefit of the very medicines created at the expense of their suffering,” Pamela Palmater, a Mi’kmaq lawyer, activist and Associate Professor and Chair in Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University, wrote in a June 17 [article](#) for *teleSUR*.

“Survivor stories of frequent rapes, forced abortions, and unmarked graves stand in stark contradiction to any notion of a benign education policy. Why else did these schools have graveyards instead of playgrounds?

“It is too easy for politicians to claim ‘cultural genocide’ now, when they are well aware that cultural genocide was specifically left out of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” she continued.

“Leaders ought to be held accountable if they knew or should have known about the actions and failed to prevent them. Direct evidence of intent is not necessary but can be inferred from circumstantial evidence.”

The [U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#) was drafted following the horrors of the World War II Holocaust to prevent even remotely similar atrocities from ever occurring again.

By definition, under international law, ‘genocide’ occurs when “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part’

(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

“In residential schools, children were forcibly removed, starved, denied medical care, and many suffered slow deaths,” Palmater continued in her article. “Genocide is the material destruction of a group or part of a group. There is no set number of people that must be killed for the crime of genocide to occur. It does not need to mimic the worst holocaust to be genocide.”

The genocide debate prompted *National Post* columnist Stephen Maher to write an article on June 11 called [“Not genocide? Ask the Beothuks”](#) in response to Conrad Black’s [June 6 article](#) in the same publication, in which Black argued that Canada’s treatment of Indigenous Peoples was “shameful, but not genocide.”

“After Conrad Black wrote in these pages last week that ‘even the First Nations should be grateful that the Europeans came here,’ aboriginal people across Canada angrily denounced him for rejecting the idea that they were the victims of attempted cultural genocide. However, there was a notable exception. No Beothuks complained,” Maher wrote, using the Indigenous group that occupied what is now called Newfoundland at the time of European colonization of the Island and the subsequent mass killing of Natives here to illustrate the point that many Canadians are disillusioned or in denial about the colonial violence—which included genocide—that our provinces and country are founded upon.

[The TRC Report] gives us the language for asking the hard but unavoidable question: How are we to live as settlers in what we call Canada? — Mayana C. Slobodia, writer

Even those critical of the TRC report’s failure to identify Canada’s residential school policies as an act of ‘genocide’, however, are noting the report’s achievement in providing Canada’s settler and Indigenous populations with the information necessary to begin on the path to reconciliation.

“This country needs to be shaken out of its indifference. It needs to acknowledge a dark history that Canada authored. Canadians must consider how to remedy the harm that we – Canadians – caused,” reads a June 2 [editorial](#) in the *Globe and Mail*.

“Non-aboriginal Canadians hear about the problems faced by aboriginal communities but they have almost no idea how those problems developed,’ Mr. Sinclair says in his report. That’s not an excuse any more.”

Others have said the report reads like the long chapter that has been missing from Canadian history books, and that reading and understanding it affords

settler Canadians an opportunity to meaningfully steer our shared future toward one based on acknowledged truths, reconciliation and shared prosperity, rather than denial and the continued oppression of the land's first peoples.

"The Report of the TRC ... transforms a commission addressing Aboriginal people and policy into a commission also about the rest of us," Mayana C. Slobodia wrote for [VICE](#) on June 9. "It gives us the language for asking the hard but unavoidable question: How are we to live as settlers in what we call Canada?"

A frail-looking John Crosbie, former MP, federal cabinet minister and Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, stood on the steps of Confederation Building at the Rally for Reconciliation and apologized to onlookers, saying, "I should have done more when I was in a position to do more," and that there "just isn't any counterargument" against recognizing the history of residential school victims and survivors in Labrador and Newfoundland and making a formal apology for the generations of atrocities and suffering.

Crosbie told *The Independent* federal politicians today "have no reason to turn away" from the TRC report and the call to settle outstanding litigation for residential school survivors, and that "the time to act is now."

Whatever the future holds for Canada's settler and Indigenous Peoples, those who attended the rally all seem to agree that governments must do whatever they can to ensure the province's residential school victims and survivors are recognized, apologized to and compensated for their pain and suffering.

"We encourage the parties to come to a timely end to the mediation, helping the Newfoundland and Labrador residential school survivors to begin to find closure, begin their healing process, and get the recognition they deserve," Ford said, reading a statement from Nunatsiavut President Sarah Leo.

"Reconciliation is just the beginning."

- See more at: <http://theindependent.ca/2015/06/19/no-reconciliation-for-n-l-residential-school-survivors-yet/#sthash.SBh5HGAX.dpuf>

Manitoba says sorry for taking aboriginal children from homes

Thousands of aboriginal children across Canada were taken by child-welfare agents in 60s Scoop and placed with non-native families

By: Chinta Puxley The Canadian Press, Published on Thu Jun 18 2015

Marlene Orgeron and her brothers were seized from her Manitoba reserve when she was 3.

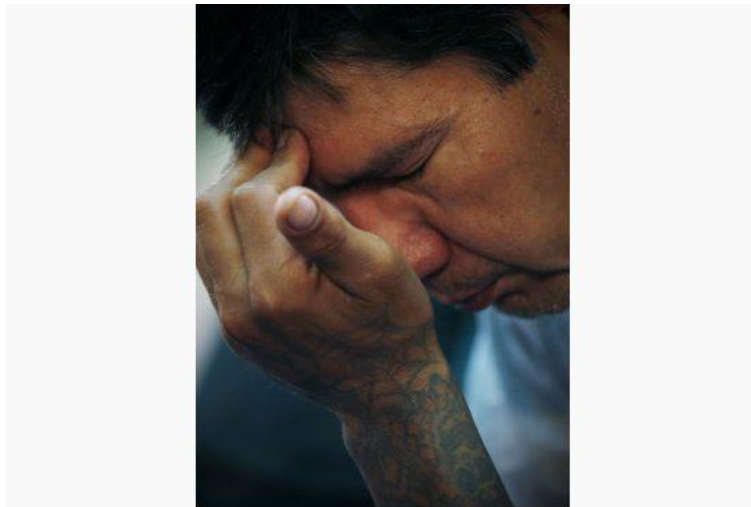
Her uncle protested and was told by social workers he would be arrested if he tried to stop them. Orgeron says she was robbed of her identity and taken to New Orleans where she was abused mentally and physically by a white family.

“I grew up wanting to die, wanting the pain to end,” a crying Orgeron recalled before a gathering of other adoptees at the Manitoba legislature. “I spent the last 20 years putting myself back together.”

On Thursday, Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger apologized to Orgeron and thousands of other victims.

“I would like to apologize on behalf of the Province of Manitoba for [the 60s Scoop](#) — the practice of removing First Nation, Métis and Inuit children from their families and placing them for adoption in nonindigenous homes, sometimes far from their home community, and for the losses of culture and identity to the children and their families and communities,” Selinger told a packed gallery of adoptees, supporters and aboriginal leaders.

“With these words of apology and regret, I hope that all Canadians will join me in recognizing this historical injustice.”



A '60s Scoop adoptee weeps at a gathering before a Manitoba apology.

It is the first apology from a Canadian province recognizing a period of history many see as akin to the [dark chapter of Indian residential schools](#). An estimated 20,000 aboriginal children were taken by child-welfare agents starting in the 1960s and placed with non-aboriginal families.

That practice, which stripped those children of their language, culture and traditions, has left “intergenerational scars” similar to those of residential schools, Selinger said.

Manitoba will raise the 60s Scoop at the next roundtable on missing and murdered aboriginal women and ensure it will be included in the provincial school curriculum, he promised.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Eric Robinson, himself a residential school survivor, said the apology is “only the first step toward total reconciliation.”

Adoptees were subjected to medical exams and treated “like we were pets,” he said.

“The struggles carry on to this very day.”

Coleen Rajotte, who was taken from her Cree family in Saskatchewan and raised in Winnipeg, said the apology is the beginning of an important conversation. There are many stories still left to be told and children who have never been found, she said.

“Imagine someone kicking down your doors, snatching your children and not telling them where they are going. You have no idea when they’ll be back.

“That’s what happened to 20,000 of us.”

The apology marks “an historic day,” but the real reconciliation has just begun, she said.

Class-action lawsuits have been filed in Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan and aboriginal leaders have said they hope the apology is accompanied by action.

[Grand Chief Derek Nepinak](#) of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs suggested there should be a DNA data centre that could help reunite families. The province also needs to address the record number of aboriginal kids still under the control of Child and Family Services, he added.

Manitoba has more than 10,000 kids in care and the vast majority are aboriginal.

“Today’s CFS is taking children and dislocating them significantly from the ones they love, denying them of identity,” Nepinak said.

David Chartrand, head of the Manitoba Métis Federation, said the province didn’t talk with the Métis prior to the apology and consultation is now needed for a clear plan of action.

“There is no strategy,” Chartrand said. “What are the next steps? Nobody knows.”

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/06/18/manitoba-says-sorry-for-taking-aboriginal-children-from-homes.html>

Manitoba Apologizes for Forcibly Removing Indigenous Children From Their Families

By [Arthur White](#)

June 18, 2015 |

A Canadian provincial government has apologized for the forced removal of thousands of indigenous children from their parents over two decades, a practice judges and advocacy groups have long called "cultural genocide."

From the early 1960s to the 1980s, social workers took children from First Nations, Inuit and Métis families, without their consent, and placed them in foster care or adoptive homes. The practice became known as the "Sixties Scoop." By the 1970s, approximately one third of indigenous children were in care across Canada, with 70 percent of them transferred to white families who seldom understood their culture or background.

Thursday afternoon, after drum ceremonies and testimony from victims, Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger stood up in the provincial legislative chamber and said: "Today as Premier I would like to apologize on behalf of the province of Manitoba for the Sixties Scoop."

Selinger acknowledged that the removals constituted "a practice of forced assimilation" that "must now be recognized for the harm it caused and continues to cause."

Many now view the practice as a continuation of Canada's longstanding campaign to assimilate indigenous children into the white majority, stripping them of their language, culture and identities. The scoop took off as the government began to wind down Canada's residential school system, which placed indigenous children in church-run institutions that actively suppressed their traditions. Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has apologized for the schools, which became notorious for physical and sexual abuse, but neither the federal government, nor any other Canadian province has apologized for the scoop that followed.

Earlier this month, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which heard testimony from hundreds of residential school survivors, called the schools a form of "cultural genocide." More than 20 years ago, a committee made the same comment about the Sixties Scoop, with Justice Edwin Kimmelman stating "unequivocally" that "cultural genocide has been taking place in a systematic, routine manner."

The United Nations Convention on Genocide states that "forcibly transferring children of the group to another group?" constitutes genocide when the intent is to destroy a culture."

"An abysmal lack of sensitivity to children and families was revealed," Kimmelman wrote in the 1985 report. "Families approached agencies for help and found that what was described as being in the child's 'best interest?' resulted in their families being torn asunder and siblings separated."

Unlike residential schools, which aimed to ["kill the Indian in the child,"](#) the Sixties Scoop seems to have been the result of social workers acting in good faith, but failing due to ignorance of indigenous culture. Academic work on the removals mentions cases where children's aid removed children from families because they did not have refrigerators, even though it was not commonplace at the time in indigenous homes.

Two decades after the fact, Selinger addressed Kimmelman's charges, admitting that the practice was a form of cultural genocide. "It is important that we acknowledge the reality of that description," he said.

Damon Johnston, president of the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Manitoba's capital, said Thursday marked "a step in the right direction."

"The people who were scooped, who were taken from their families, I think they will be pleased overall to hear the apology," he told VICE News.

But Johnston emphasized that action must follow the government's admission of guilt, and he called on the government to come through with more support for people suffering from the psychological consequences of being cut off from their identity.

"It was a serious offence against our people, and I think it's deserving of some compensation," he said. "It's core to any human being to know who your parents are, what your ethnic origin is, who you're connected to."

Selinger said he was "committed" to starting "on the path to reconciliation." He noted that his government had introduced legislation to open up sealed birth records and help reunite families, something survivors of the scoop have long been calling for. But he did not directly address the issue of compensation.

Like many First Nations leaders, Johnston says assimilationist policies are part of the explanation for the wide economic gap that separates First Nations and Métis people from other Canadians. At 50 percent, Manitoba has the lowest employment rate for indigenous people in the entire country. Median income for indigenous people in the province is \$17,690, compared to over \$30,000 for non-Aboriginals. Johnston said that conditions on Manitoba's First Nations reserves are "some of the worst in the country," with little access to potable water and widespread overcrowding.

"Indigenous people are far too often portrayed as being there with their hand out," he told VICE News. "But it has to be understood that that was meant to be. We were subject to genocide, we were subject to the Indian Act. So in that kind of a situation, who could be healthy? We were never given a chance."

After Selinger's speech, Ian Wishart of the opposition Progressive Conservative Party said that he was "concerned that an apology will not be enough." He said that, even today, a highly disproportionate number of the children taken into care are from First Nations. A [Globe and Mail article](#) from this March found that approximately 90 percent of the 10,000 Manitoban children in care are indigenous, though Johnston told VICE News that progress has been made in keeping those children in the community.

But another First Nations leader, Grand Chief Terrance Nelson of the Southern Chiefs' Organization, wrote in an email that "with the legislation and policies that continue to usurp children from their families to this day, this 60's Scoop Apology is nothing more than a platitude." He told VICE News that the continued "seizing" of Aboriginal children by Manitoba's Child and Family Services is "an industry corrupt with exploitation" and he urged the government to cancel the practice and redirect its financing to Aboriginal communities.

Coleen Rajotte, who was adopted into a white family during the scoop, stood in the halls of the legislature and spoke about how she tried to find her birth family for years. She spoke about the emotion she felt as she read letters her mother had written to try to get her back.

"As a kid, I had no idea who I was," she said, "and what nation I belonged to."

Rajotte, who now works as a filmmaker, told the stories of survivors she interviewed who were beaten or raped by the families they were sent to.

She called Selinger's apology "historic" and "a new beginning."

Selinger said the province wants to see "all levels of government act on their responsibility," and that he would be bringing the issue to the national level.

VICE News contacted provincial governments in Ontario and British Columbia, as well as the federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs, to ask if they would be issuing a similar apology. A federal government representative said that they are "committed to the health, the safety and well-being of First Nations children. Child welfare services are delivered according to provincial laws and standards." They did not say if an apology would be forthcoming.

Direct Link: <https://news.vice.com/article/manitoba-apologizes-for-forcibly-removing-indigenous-children-from-their-families>

Canada's media attacks Truth and Reconciliation report

By Carl Bronski
20 June 2015

In the face of the evidence collected by Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the mainstream, corporate-controlled media has had to acknowledge that the Canadian state's Indian Residential School program subjected generations of Indian, Inuit and Metis children to horrific, systematic abuse.

But the Commission's finding that the residential schools were a key element in a more than century-long government Aboriginal policy that aimed at "cultural genocide"—at destroying aboriginal society and the structures that supported it so as to "divest" Canada of its "legal and financial obligations to Aboriginal people and gain control over their land and resources"—has provoked a storm of protest.

An objective examination of the historical record shows that what was perpetrated by the Canadian state against the Aboriginal peoples was genocide plain and simple, not just "cultural genocide." Moreover, this crime was not accidental or incidental to the consolidation of the Canadian nation state and Canadian "democracy". On the contrary it arose from the very nature of Canadian capitalism, from the clash between capitalist private property and the communal social relations of indigenous society. (See [Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Report and the crimes against the native people](#) and [Canada's aboriginal Truth and Reconciliation Report—the class issues.](#))

Yet even the qualified claim of "cultural genocide" that the government-appointed TRC put forth with the aim of "reconciling" the indigenous population to Canadian capitalism has produced a backlash from columnists in the country's newspapers. Taking their cue from Prime Minister Stephen Harper's refusal to endorse the TRC's conclusion, right-wing and liberal commentators alike have accused the TRC of rhetorical overkill and, horror of horrors, impugning Canada's "good name."

Leading the charge was a particularly odious op-ed piece in the neo-conservative *National Post* written by Rodney E. Clifton, professor emeritus of education at the University of Manitoba and retired anthropology professor Hymie Rubenstein from the same institution. In an article headlined "Debunking the half-truths and exaggerations in the TRC Report," the authors argue that the Indian Residential Schools program was simply aimed at teaching "mainstream norms and practices" by providing a formal education in a "complex multi-ethnic society." What the TRC characterizes as "cultural genocide" was in fact only the standard "acculturation" process "that has occurred around the world since the origins of human beings."

Certainly, the authors concede, there was strict discipline, but strapping and caning (and even the "vile act of child abuse") were the "order-of-the day" in parochial schools right up to the 1960s. Indeed, write Clifton and Rubenstein, similar traumas and indignities "have been reported by the children of wealthy parents forced to attend boarding schools throughout the former British Empire."

One needs to rub one's eyes, not once but twice, after reading such a statement. The Canadian state's Residential School policy forced aboriginal parents, sometimes at the point of an RCMP gun, to surrender their children. They would then be taken to church-run schools hundreds and even thousands of miles away from their homes.

There they were subjected to humiliating and de-humanizing treatment so as to eradicate the influence of native culture and inculcate obedience. Children were routinely beaten for speaking their native language and berated for being "stupid Indians."

The system was designed by the government to be self-sustaining, i.e., to cost it no money. While they were called schools, the church-run institutions that were attended by 150,000 native children functioned far more like prisons. Much of the "school day" was given over to backbreaking chores, including working in the fields. Yet food and schoolbooks were scarce and rationed. In addition to an official regime of harsh corporal punishment, the native children were the victims of wholesale sexual abuse.

As the WSWs reported in summarizing the findings of the TRC, between "5,000 and 7,000 children died whilst in the custody of these residential schools from disease, malnutrition, fires, suicide and physical abuse. Many were buried even without a name recorded. Parents were not notified as a matter of course. Healthy children were consciously placed in dormitories with children suffering from tuberculosis. Sick and dying children were forced to attend class and sit up in church. Malnutrition was rampant. Testimony from school survivors recounted how hungry children would raid the slop-buckets of livestock for additional sustenance."

Government legislation in Alberta (1928) and British Columbia (1933) authorized the forcible sterilization of residential school children. In the 1940s and 1950s aboriginal children in some residential schools were deliberately kept malnourished at the government's order so that researchers could "scientifically" measure the impact of a starvation diet.

Clifton and Rubenstein take particular umbrage with the TRC's statement that the aboriginal population was treated as "sub-human." There are numerous survivor accounts and historical documents that back the TRC's assertion. The 1876 Indian Act—the framework for ongoing aboriginal policy in Canada which legalized the First Nations as an inferior group—stated the "aborigines must be kept in a state of tutelage and treated as wards or children of the state". Well into the 20th century, speeches from the floors of parliament and the provincial legislatures referred to natives as an "inferior race."

The residential school system was only a part of a broad-based policy to repress and dispossess the aboriginal peoples. An overt policy of starvation was used to drive First Nations from their ancestral lands on the Prairies. Treaty rights were unilaterally abrogated by the Canadian government. "Pass Laws" were enacted that made it illegal for First Nations people to leave the reserve without the approval of the government's Indian agent. Authorities from South Africa tasked with framing their own system of apartheid were so impressed by Canadian policy towards the aboriginal peoples that they based

elements of their own racist system on it. Only in 1960 were “status Indians” granted the right to vote and other basic citizenship rights.

But for our Manitoba college professors, this particular survivor testimony from Elder Irene Favel might be more directly edifying on the question of sub-human treatment in the residential schools:

“I went to residential school in Muscowequan from 1944 to 1949, and I had a rough life. I was mistreated in every way. There was a young girl, and she was pregnant from a priest there. And what they did, she had her baby, and they took the baby, and wrapped it up in a nice pink outfit, and they took it downstairs where I was cooking dinner with the nun. And they took the baby into the furnace room, and they threw that little baby in there and burned it alive. All you could hear was this little cry, like ‘Uuh!’ and that was it. You could smell that flesh cooking.”

Other prominent columnists in Canadian newspapers have also decried, with more circumspection than the *National Post*, the conclusion of the TRC’s report. Jeffrey Simpson of the *Globe and Mail* just wishes Canadians would simply move on from a “relentless fixation on the past”. “Cultural genocide ... was practiced for a long time throughout much of the world, often more violently than in Canada, to the point where the word has lost much of its meaning except as a rhetorical debating point.” Richard Gwyn of the *Toronto Star* wonders, “Did Canada really commit cultural genocide?” For Gwyn the history detailed by the TRC report is incongruent with Canadians’ self-image and the world’s view of Canada as a land of democracy, tolerance and fair play. After all, he opines, in comparison to Australia and the United States, in the 19th century, “our native policies were widely praised.”

But this is not all “just history.”

The legacy from the genocidal policies of the Canadian state reverberates through native communities up to the present time. Life spans for native people fall far below the national average. More than half of all native children live in poverty. HIV and AIDS rates are higher on some western reserves than in the most vulnerable of African countries. In the far north, diseases such as tuberculosis are rampant in some communities. Overcrowding in dilapidated homes is endemic. Almost half of all residences on native reserves require urgent, major repairs.

Education opportunities are deplorable—fewer than 50 percent of students on reserves graduate from high school. The federally funded schools on native reserves receive on average 30 percent less funding than other Canadian schools. Numerous native communities don’t have access to potable water, with boil water advisories in effect, on average, at over a hundred of the 631 native reserves at any given time.

Incarceration rates for aboriginals are nine times the national average. A native youth is more likely to go to prison than get a high school diploma. Although they make up just 4 percent of Canada’s population, 25 percent of those held in federal prisons are aboriginal.

Poverty conditions are not restricted to those living on reserves. Natives in urban centres, which comprise about half of the rapidly growing 1.2 million native population, have the country's highest unemployment rates, second only to the rates for native reserves. Nationwide, about 50 percent of First Nations people and Inuit are unemployed.

Direct Link: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/06/20/ctrc-j20.html>

National Aboriginal Day more significant following Truth and Reconciliation report: First Nations Chief

By [Caley Ramsay](#) Web Producer Global News



WATCH ABOVE: Several events took place across the country, marking National Aboriginal Day. In Edmonton, this year's event held deeper meaning. Eric Szeto explains.

EDMONTON – The sights and sounds of National Aboriginal Day were taken in by hundreds of people in Edmonton Sunday.

“It’s a time for us to celebrate and just be together and just to know that we’re still here, we’re still very resilient, we’re still very strong,” said Bernadette Iahtail, executive director of [the Creating Hope Society](#).

“It’s celebrating the people,” added Papaschase First Nation Chief Calvin Bruneau. “It’s acknowledging us, who we are and our people, our language, our culture.”

National Aboriginal Day was proclaimed in 1996, as a day for all Canadians to celebrate the cultures and contributions to Canada of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples.

“I’m hoping that they see there is a thing to be celebrated,” Iahtail said of those in attendance at the celebrations in Churchill Square Sunday morning.

“We’re all here on the same planet and we need to work together, we need to be together, we need to understand one another. And we also need to be able to acknowledge one another and shake hands and say, ‘Thank you for being here, thank you for being part of this life.’”

Both Iahtail and Bruneau say this year’s celebrations seem more significant following the release of the long-awaited Truth and Reconciliation report.

The summary of the Truth and Reconciliation report, released in early June, is the culmination of six emotional years of extensive study into Canada’s church-run, government-funded residential school system, which operated for more than 120 years. The report called it nothing short of a “cultural genocide.”

“The residential school experience is clearly one of the darkest most troubling chapters in our collective history,” said Justice Murray Sinclair, Canada’s first aboriginal justice and the commission’s chairman.

“In the period from Confederation until the decision to close residential schools was taken in this country in 1969, Canada clearly participated in a period of cultural genocide.”

The report made 94 recommendations – everything from greater police independence and reducing the number of aboriginal children in foster care to restrictions on the use of conditional and mandatory minimum sentences. It also called on the federal government to establish a statutory holiday to honour survivors, their families and communities.

In Edmonton Sunday, Bruneau said he feels there’s been more acceptance for aboriginal people since the release of the report.

“There’s more of an understanding amongst non-aboriginal people and they understand what took place back then, or they’re beginning to. They’re beginning to see the size and scope of the residential schools across Canada, how it impacted the communities and continues to impact our people today,” he said.

And while Iahtail says there is much work to be done, she believes there’s a bigger support system for aboriginal people in Canada.

“I truly believe that the Truth and Reconciliation really kind of set the motion to move things forward,” she said. “There’s been a big push, a big movement. I think aboriginal people are finally feeling that they’re being heard, that they’re being understood.

“I just think that the baby steps that we’ve taken in the past, now we’re leaping forward.”

More than 130 residential schools operated across Canada and the federal government has estimated at least 150,000 First Nation, Metis and Inuit students passed through the system. The last school, located outside of Regina, closed in 1996.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2067152/national-aboriginal-day-more-significant-following-truth-and-reconciliation-report-first-nations-chief/>

NDP calls for '60s Scoop apology

By Natascia Lypny, Leader-Post June 21, 2015



Saskatchewan NDP leader Cam Broten wants Saskatchewan's provincial government to apologize for the '60s scoop, which resulted in more than 20,000 First Nations and Metis children nationwide being taken from their homes and placed in the care of non-aboriginal families. (DON HEALY/Leader-Post)

The Saskatchewan NDP is calling on the provincial government to issue an apology for the '60s Scoop, and take action to address the damage the program inflicted.

"Our province's involvement in the '60s Scoop program wasn't right, and it's important to recognize that and I believe it's important to make an apology," said NDP leader Cam Broten on Sunday, as the country celebrated National Aboriginal Day.

Broten said he has spoken with Scoop survivors and, "it absolutely causes a great amount of pain, a great amount of questioning and many problems down the road."

The provincial government could not make someone available for comment on Sunday.

The Adopt Indian Metis program, which became known as the '60s Scoop, took First Nations and Metis children from their homes and placed them in the care of non-aboriginal families during the 1960s, '70s and '80s. It is estimated more than 20,000 children were affected by this program.

Saskatchewan participated in the program from 1966 to 1975.

Last week, Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger became the first political leader to officially apologize on behalf of a province for participating in the '60s Scoop.

But Broten doesn't just want words.

"The apology is important, and then there's a few common-sense practical things that could be done flowing out of that as well," he said.

He proposed that Saskatchewan make birth and adoption records easily accessible so families can reconnect. He wants counselling made available. He would also like to see a roundtable initiated with '60s Scoop survivors to develop an action plan for reconciliation.

During the time of the Adopt Indian Metis program, the NDP and Liberals held office in Saskatchewan. But Broten said, "This isn't a partisan matter. It's about us as Saskatchewan people, as Canadians, recognizing mistakes that we have made over the decades."

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/news/calls+Scoop+apology/11155297/story.html>

Text of Alberta Premier Rachel Notley's apology to residential school survivors

[National News](#) | June 23, 2015 by [APTN National News](#) |

APTN National News

Speaking notes, Honourable Rachel Notley, Premier of Alberta.

Alberta seeks renewed relationship with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples of Alberta.

June 22, 2015

Ministerial Statement

Truth and Reconciliation, Residential Schools and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On June 2nd the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada held a special event in our nation's capital.

For six years leading up to this, thousands of courageous First Nations, Metis and Inuit people spoke their truth about the devastating experience of residential schools.

We as Canadians bore witness to that truth.

We were shocked and at times rendered speechless as we learned of the First Nation, Metis and Inuit children forcibly removed from their homes, placed beyond the protection and love of their families.

We felt deeply for the adults who shared their journey to come to terms with the broken child within.

They have given us their truth.

Now, as Albertans and Canadians, it is up to us become a part of this healing journey – through acts of reconciliation.

As Justice Murray Sinclair so poignantly stated:

We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you the path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta is ready to follow the path.

As our first step, we want the First Nation, Metis and Inuit people of Alberta to know that we deeply regret the profound harm and damage that occurred to generations of children forced to attend residential schools.

Although the Province of Alberta did not establish this system, members of this Chamber did not take a stand against it.

For this silence, we apologize.

These schools broke the connection between child and family...between community, language and culture.

These children too often lost the ability to connect again with their families...losing their identity and the confidence to pass on their traditions to their own children.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we also deeply regret the intergenerational damage that perpetuates itself in poverty, neglect, drug addiction, mental health issues, and great despair.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we are joined by many proud members of the First Nation, Metis and Inuit communities of Alberta. Many are residential school survivors...all are advocates for missing and murdered women and quite simply outstanding members of their communities.

To these honoured guests and to the residential school survivors of Alberta, I would like to say:

As children you entered those schools alone and frightened.

This past is too painful to endure on your own.

In the journey of reconciliation you no longer have to walk alone.

Your truth has woken our conscience and our sense of justice.

True reconciliation will only be achieved if we as governments and citizens are willing to make a fundamental shift in our relationship with the First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples of Alberta.

We will do that.

Yesterday was National Aboriginal Day.

On the longest day of the year, we shone the light on the distinct cultures, histories and heritage of First Nations, Metis and Inuit people in Alberta.

Today, I want that light to illuminate the hearts of all Albertans.

I want the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women to come out of the shadows and be viewed with compassion and understanding in the clear light of day.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission spoke to a devastating link between the large number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and the many harmful factors in their lives, such as domestic violence, poverty and the number of Aboriginal children in the child welfare system.

Mr. Speaker, the Executive Summary Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission also stated that this complex interplay of factors are part of the legacy of residential schools, and this must be examined alongside the lack of success of police forces in solving these crimes against Aboriginal women.

Too many indigenous women are missing.

Too many indigenous families have suffered.

Too many communities don't have the answers they need.

When Helen Betty Osborne was murdered in The Pas Manitoba it took more than 16 years for charges to be brought forward.

During those 16 years, there were people who knew who was guilty – but said nothing.

It was called a conspiracy of silence.

That was 43 years ago.

Today, out of that long, unsettling silence a strong and determined voice has emerged.

We hear that voice across our province... in the growing movement within the hearts and homes of Albertans, from family members and friends of those who are gone, and in moving art exhibits from those who were touched by the tragedies of our silent sisters.

Mr. Speaker, today our government joins these voices.

Today, Alberta joins the call for a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women.

Our hearts...and a strong sense of justice and humanity compels us to speak loudly and clearly for these young, beautiful women who were mothers, daughters... sisters... who were deeply loved and are now deeply missed.

We join the families, national Aboriginal organizations, the provinces and territories to lend our voice to the call for a national inquiry, because it is the right thing to do.

We must openly face the root causes that place Aboriginal women and girls at the highest risk.

Harsh realities like poverty, racism, inadequate housing and lack of educational opportunities, among them.

Until these root causes are addressed, the violence will continue.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta government will develop a renewed relationship with Aboriginal peoples, based on trust and respect and take true action on these root causes, once and for all.

Because we understand that true reconciliation is a matter of action, not just words.

There is good work being done out there, Mr. Speaker.

Alberta is working with Aboriginal communities and organizations to improve the lives and safety of Aboriginal women through local solutions such as supporting the Moose Hide campaign which is aimed at men taking a stand against violence towards Aboriginal women and girls;

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General is working with our federal, provincial and territorial counterparts on a Justice Framework to Address Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls; and, analyzing the data from community engagement to determine best practices for a culturally safe victim services response.

Our government is working with Aboriginal communities to address issues with early intervention supports to help keep children safe and families together, and involving the extended family and the community when a child first becomes involved in our system.

And we will also work with the First Nations Women's Economic Security Council and the Metis Women's Economic Security Council on the issue of trafficking of women and girls in Canada, as it relates to missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to work with Aboriginal communities and organizations until Aboriginal women in Alberta can see a future for themselves that is safe and fulfilling.

So in this time of summer solstice we will not let the light dim on the crisis taking place across our province and country.

With full conviction, we lend our voice and our conscience to doing right by the women, their families and their communities.

The silence that once was, has long since passed.

We will not fail these women.

Not this time.

Now is the time for their voices to be heard, by all Albertans and all Canadians.

Thank you.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/06/23/text-alberta-premier-rachel-notleys-apology-residential-school-survivors/>

Alberta becomes second province to apologize to residential school survivors, then calls for action on MMIW

[National News](#) | June 23, 2015 by [Brandi Morin](#)



(Editors Note: APTN National News originally reported that Alberta was the first province to apologize to residential school survivors. On June 12, 2008, then premier Gary Doer apologized in the Manitoba legislature making it the first province to formally apologize)

APTN National News

EDMONTON — The Alberta Government apologized to victims of residential schools Monday, the first province in Canada to do so and also joined other jurisdictions to call for an inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women.

“Although the Province of Alberta did not establish this system, members of this Chamber did not take a stand against it,” said Notley in a ministerial statement during session at the Alberta Legislature. “For this silence, we apologize.”

She said the past is too painful to endure on one’s own, to the former children who entered the schools “alone and frightened.”

“In the journey of reconciliation you no longer have to walk alone. Your truth has woken our conscience and our sense of justice.”

About two dozen invited guests including residential school survivors, Alberta chiefs and representatives of Indigenous advocacy groups were present during the apology.

Treaty Six Grand Chief Bernice Martial was in attendance.

“It was overwhelming for me,” said Martial. “I thought, ‘Wow!’ finally coming from a premier.”

Chief Ron Morin of Enoch Cree Nation near Edmonton said he was appreciative of the apology, but added with all of the sorry’s said by governments in recent years, it’s time they took reconciliation to another level by sharing natural resource revenues.

“Many of us are saying if you don’t want to go that extra step and deal with that component of financial aspects then we think a lot of this is disingenuous in the sense that they’ll go so far in social components but not all the way with natural resources,” said Morin. “And the life blood that provides quality of life for people to have a job and earn a living. They should go that extra mile and deal with it and talk with chiefs across Canada and the wrongful taking of those natural resources,” said Morin.



From left: Enoch Cree Nation Chief Ron Morin, Alexander First Nation Chief Kurk Burnstick, Cold Lake First Nation and Treaty 6 Grand Chief Bernice Martial, Alexis Nakota Sioux First Nation Chief Tony Alexis and Woodland Cree Chief Issac Laboucan at the Alberta Legislature today following the apology and announcement. Photo: Brandi Morin/APTN

The apology was followed by an announcement for support of a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Notley said her government recognizes a connection between the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and the residential school legacy.

“We also deeply regret the inter-generational damage that perpetuates itself in poverty, neglect, drug addiction, mental health issues, and great despair... The Truth and Reconciliation Commission spoke to a devastating link between the large number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and the many harmful factors in their lives, such as domestic violence, poverty and the number of Aboriginal children in the child welfare system.”

Notley added that her government is committed to addressing the root causes of violence against Indigenous women.

“Because we understand that true reconciliation is a matter of action, not just words.”

She stated that Alberta is working with Aboriginal communities and organizations to improve the lives and safety of Aboriginal women through supporting the Moose Hide campaign, an initiative aimed at men taking a stand against violence toward Aboriginal women and girls.

Chief Martial, an outspoken advocate on violence against Aboriginal women and girls said she is hopeful Prime Minister Stephen Harper will reconsider his stance on a National Inquiry.

“It’s been a long time coming,” said Martial.

According to Notely, Alberta is working with all levels of government to address MMIW, and that the province is committed to work with the First Nations Women’s Economic Security Council and the Metis Women’s Economic Security Council regarding trafficking of women and girls in Canada.

“Our hearts...and a strong sense of justice and humanity compels us to speak loudly and clearly for these young, beautiful women who were mothers, daughters... sisters... who were deeply loved and are now deeply missed. We join the families, national Aboriginal organizations, the provinces and territories to lend our voice to the call for a national inquiry, because it is the right thing to do,” said Premier Notley.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/06/23/alberta-becomes-first-province-apologize-residential-schools-calls-action-mmiw/>

Saskatchewan Métis leader wants premier to apologize for '60s Scoop

By Staff The Canadian Press, June 23, 2015 1:44 pm



Robert Doucette, the head of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, is calling on the premier to apologize for the '60s Scoop.

SASKATOON – The president of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan is calling on the province’s premier to follow Manitoba in apologizing for the 60s Scoop. Robert Doucette was four months old when he was taken from his biological mother in Buffalo Narrows and placed with a foster family in Prince Albert.

He is among the latest political leaders in Saskatchewan asking for the premier to apologize for the government's handling of the events referred to as the 60s Scoop.

An estimated 20,000 aboriginal children were taken by child-welfare agents starting in the 1960s and placed with non-aboriginal families.

Last week Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger apologized on behalf of his government.

Doucette says Premier Brad Wall and the Saskatchewan legislative assembly need to do right by First Nations and Métis people in the province and all apologize for the events that occurred during the 1960s.

On Monday, Alberta Premier Rachel Notley apologized on behalf of her province to indigenous peoples for decades of abuse in residential schools.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2070611/saskatchewan-metis-leader-wants-premier-to-apologize-for-60s-scoop/>

Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

New DNA Results Show Kennewick Man Was Native American

JUNE 18, 2015



A plastic recreation of the Kennewick Man skull. Danish scientists' findings make it clear that he was Native American. Credit Harley Soltes for The New York Times

In July 1996, two college students were wading in the shallows of the Columbia River near the town of Kennewick, Wash., when they stumbled across a human skull.

At first the police treated the case as a possible murder. But once a nearly complete skeleton emerged from the riverbed and was examined, it became clear that the bones were extremely old — 8,500 years old, it would later turn out.

The skeleton, which came to be known as Kennewick Man or the Ancient One, is one of the oldest and perhaps the most important — and controversial — ever found in North America. Native American tribes said that the bones were the remains of an ancestor and moved to reclaim them in order to provide a ritual burial.

But a group of scientists filed a lawsuit to stop them, arguing that Kennewick Man could not be linked to living Native Americans. Adding to the controversy was the claim from some scientists that Kennewick Man's skull had unusual "Caucasoid" features. [Speculation flew](#) that Kennewick Man was European.

A [California pagan group](#) went so far as to file a lawsuit seeking to bury the skeleton in a pre-Christian Norse ceremony.

On Thursday, Danish scientists [published](#) an analysis of DNA obtained from the skeleton. Kennewick Man's genome clearly does not belong to a European, the scientists said.

"It's very clear that Kennewick Man is most closely related to contemporary Native Americans," said Eske Willerslev, a geneticist at the University of Copenhagen and lead author of the study, which was published in the journal Nature. "In my view, it's bone-solid."

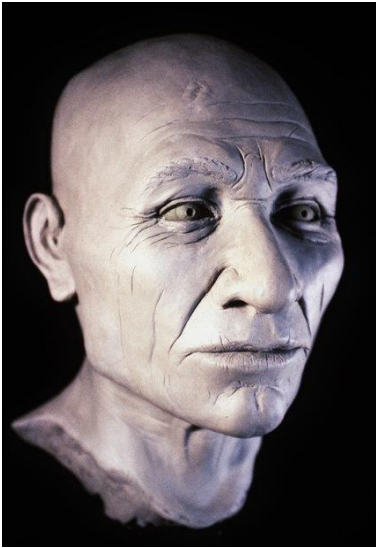
Kennewick Man's genome also sheds new light on how people first spread throughout the New World, experts said. There was no mysterious intrusion of Europeans thousands of years ago. Instead, several waves spread across the New World, with distinct branches reaching South America, Northern North America, and the Arctic.

"It's probably a lot more complicated than we had initially envisioned," said Jennifer A. Raff, a research fellow at the University of Texas, who was not involved in the study.

But the new study has not extinguished the debate over what to do with Kennewick Man.

Dr. Willerslev and his colleagues found that the Colville, one of the tribes that claims Kennewick Man as their own, is closely related to him. But the researchers acknowledge that they can't say whether he is in fact an ancestor of the tribe.

Nonetheless, James Boyd, the chairman of the governing board of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, said that his tribe and four others still hope to rebury Kennewick Man and that the new study should help in their efforts.



A sculpture of what Kennewick Man might have looked like. Credit James Chatters/Agence France-Presse

“We’re enjoying this moment,” said Mr. Boyd. “The findings were what we thought all along.”

The scientific study of Kennewick Man began in 2005, after eight years of litigation seeking to prevent repatriation of Kennewick Man to the Native American tribes. A group of scientists led by Douglas W. Owsley, division head of physical anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution, [gained permission](#) to study the bones.

Last year, they published a [670-page book](#) laying out their findings.

Kennewick Man stood about 5 foot 7 inches, they reported, and died at about the age of 40. He was probably a right-handed spear-thrower, judging from the oversized bones in his right arm and leg.

Based on the chemical composition of his skeleton, the scientists concluded that he originally lived on a distant coast. However he got to Kennewick, the Ancient One had been embraced by the community there: his body was buried carefully after his death, the scientists noted.

The archaeologist James Chatters initially described the skull as Caucasian, and produced a reconstruction of his face famously suggesting that Kennewick Man looked a bit like the actor [Patrick Stewart](#). But eventually Dr. Chatters decided against the European hypothesis, swayed by the discovery of other old Native American skulls with unusual shapes.

Other scientists, including Dr. Owsley and his colleagues, suggested the skull resembled those of the Moriori people, who live on the Chatham Islands 420 miles southeast of New Zealand, or the Ainu, a group of people who live in northern Japan. They speculated that the ancestors of the Ainu might have paddled canoes to the New World.

In 2013, one of the scientists examining the skeleton, Thomas W. Stafford of the University of Aarhus in Denmark, provided Dr. Willerslev and his colleagues with part of a hand bone. Dr. Willerslev and other researchers have developed powerful methods for gathering ancient DNA.

Once they had assembled the DNA into its original sequence, the scientists compared it with genomes from a number of individuals selected from around the world. They also examined genomes from living New World people, as well as the genome Dr. Willerslev and his colleagues found in a 12,600-year-old skeleton in Montana known as the Anzick child.

This analysis clearly established that Kennewick Man's DNA is Native American. But the result is at odds with the shape of his skull, which seemed to be very different from living Native Americans.

To explore that paradox, Dr. Willerslev collaborated with Christoph P. E. Zollikofer and Marcia S. Ponce de Leon, experts on skull shapes at the University of Zurich.

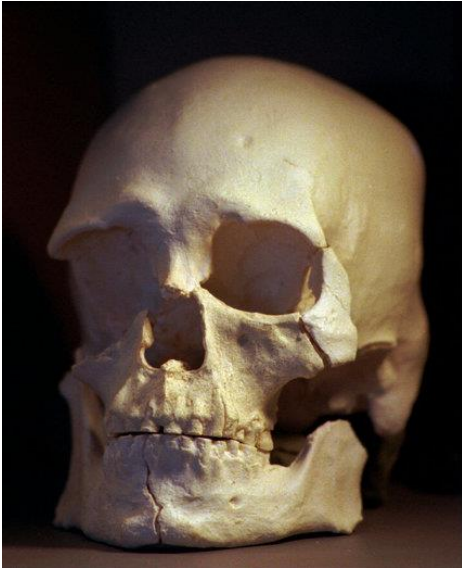
In the new research, Dr. Zollikofer and Dr. Ponce de Leon demonstrated that living Native Americans include a wide range of head shapes, and Kennewick Man doesn't lie outside that range.

Still, it would take many skulls of Kennewick Man's contemporaries to figure out if they were distinct from living Native Americans. A single skull isn't enough.

"If I take my own skull and print it out with a 3-D printer, many people would see a Neanderthal," said Dr. Zollikofer.

After determining that Kennewick Man was a Native American, Dr. Willerslev approached the five tribes that had fought in court to repatriate the skeleton. He asked if they would be interested in joining the study.

"We were hesitant," said Mr. Boyd, of the Colville Tribes. "Science hasn't been good to us." Eventually, the Colville agreed to join the study; the other four tribes did not.



A plastic casting of the Kennewick Man skull. Credit Elaine Thompson/Associated Press

The Colville Tribes and the scientists worked out an arrangement that suited them all. Dr. Willerslev and his colleagues sent equipment for collecting saliva to the reservation. Colville tribe members gathered samples and sent them back.

In exchange for permission to sequence the DNA, Dr. Willerslev and his colleagues agreed that they would share the data with other scientists only for confirmation of the findings in the Nature study.

Dr. Willerslev also invited representatives of the five tribes to Copenhagen, where they observed the research in his lab. They donned body suits to enter a clean room in the lab in order to perform a ceremony in honor of the Ancient One.

Kim M. TallBear, a cultural anthropologist at the University of Texas, praised the way the scientists worked with the Native Americans. “There’s progress there, and I’m happy about that,” she said.

When Dr. Willerslev and his colleagues looked at the Colville DNA, they found that it was the closest match to Kennewick Man among all the samples from Native Americans in the study.

But other scientists stressed that the new study didn’t have enough data to establish a tight link between Kennewick Man and any of the tribes in the region where he was found.

Unlike in Canada or Latin America, scientists in the United States do not have many genomes of Native Americans. Dr. TallBear saw this gap as a legacy of the distrust between Native Americans and scientists.

In addition to the conflict over Kennewick Man, the Havasupai Indians of Arizona [won a court case in 2010](#) to take back blood samples that they argued were being used for genetic tests to which they didn't consent. Some scientists may be reluctant to get into a similar conflict.

"People are scared post-Havasupai," Dr. TallBear said.

As a result, said Dr. Raff, scientists can't rule out the possibility that Kennewick Man is an ancestor of another tribe, or that he is the ancestor of many Native Americans. "It's impossible to say without additional data from other tribes," she said.

To Dr. Raff and other researchers, the most significant result of the new study is how Kennewick Man is related to other people of the New World.

The new study points to two major branches of Native Americans. One branch, to which Kennewick Man and the Colville belong, spread out across the northern stretch of the New World, giving rise to tribes such as the Ojibwe and Athabaskan.

The Anzick child, on the other hand, appears to belong to a separate branch of Native Americans who spread down into Central and South America. Given the ages of the Kennewick Man and the Anzick Child, the split between these branches must have been early in the peopling of the New World — perhaps even before their ancestors spread east from Asia.

About 4,000 years ago, two more waves of people spread across the Arctic. One lineage, known as the Paleo-Eskimos disappeared several centuries ago, while the other gave rise to today's Inuit peoples.

The DNA of the Colville tribe contains Asian-like pieces of DNA not found in Kennewick Man. They may have gained that genetic material by having children with the Arctic peoples.

Testing these possibilities will require more Native American DNA, and a better understanding of Native American culture, said Dr. Raff. New programs, such as the [Summer Internship for Native Americans in Genomics](#) at the University of Illinois, are giving Native Americans training that they can use to study their own history.

"They'll have valuable insights to bring into this work themselves," said Dr. Raff. "It really only strengthens the science to learn from Native Americans about their own history."

"It doesn't have to go the way Kennewick Man went at all," said Dr. TallBear.

Correction: June 18, 2015

An earlier version of this article misspelled the name of a 12,600-year-old skeleton discovered in Montana. It is known as the Anzick child, not the Anzik child.

A version of this article appears in print on June 19, 2015, on page A14 of the New York edition with the headline: New Study Links Kennewick Man to Native Americans.

Direct Link: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/science/new-dna-results-show-kennewick-man-was-native-american.html?_r=0

Counterculture group mulling gathering in Black Hills in face of Native American concerns



People affiliated with the Rainbow Family of Living Light gather Wednesday in the Black Hills area of South Dakota. The group debated whether they would convene in the area in July — which could bring more than 5,000 people to the Black Hills — should be held there after some Native Americans pushed back against the event.

June 18, 2015 2:45 pm • James Nord Associated Press

BLACK HILLS NATIONAL FOREST, S.D. — A contingent of people affiliated with a counterculture group that annually brings together thousands of people for peace gatherings met in the Black Hills on Wednesday to begin discussing whether the group would convene in the area in July.

Members of the Rainbow Family of Living Light came together to debate whether the gathering — which could bring more than 5,000 people to the Black Hills — should be held there after some Native Americans pushed back against the event.

Last year, the national event was held in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest in Utah. It last met in Wyoming in 2008 and has convened every year since 1972.

The Rainbow Family has no official leaders and no official website or member list. Its creed revolves around nonviolence, inclusiveness and praying for peace.

Roughly 50 people, many of whom have attended years of national and regional gatherings, formed a circle in a clearing in the Black Hills National Forest to hash out the site of this year's prayers for peace and healing. After joining hands, the people of the so-called Spring Council passed a feather around the circle, its holder able to speak in turn, for about four hours. The discussions could continue for several days, said Charles Winslow, 64, who is usually known as Bajer.

Black Hills National Forest Supervisor Craig Bobzien said he held a meeting with members of the group and representatives from the Oglala Sioux and Rosebud Sioux tribes. He said they were unable to reach an agreement about the gathering.

"The tribes ... didn't feel a gathering of this size would preserve the sacred nature of the Black Hills," he said.

The gatherings have led to some safety and medical issues, Bobzien said, so there will be additional law enforcement resources on hand.

But Rainbow Family members who scouted the potential site in the Black Hills — they declined to share with the Spring Council its exact location — said they were welcomed in the area while they spent time studying the land. Winslow, who has been scouting sites for the gatherings since 1978, said the group looked as far as Vermont, but found the South Dakota site to be the most suitable.

Marc Constantine Alexander, 31, who goes by Novel, said that "there are always non-Rainbow folks who dissent against Rainbow." Alexander, who is part of a camp that provides free cigarettes at the Rainbow Gathering, said he trusts the scouts who say that the Black Hills area is the best spot to hold it.

"It's kind of like a gathering like no other," Bobzien said. "I've been in the business for over 30 years, and I've never had anything that closely resembles this (gathering), so there's clearly some challenges because it's novel to me."

Direct Link: http://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/counterculture-group-mulling-gathering-in-black-hills-in-face-of/article_9636d8ce-ee94-58aa-b1e9-a0ac8c023be2.html

California Native Americans oppose Junipero Serra's canonization

By [Jessica Tonn](#) and [Kasey Quon](#) / June 18, 2015

When Pope Francis announced that Junipero Serra, the founder of California's missions in the 1700s and 1800s, would be canonized in September, California Native Americans began to protest the impending canonization.

Through the process of canonization, an individual who has died is declared a saint, or someone who is recognized to have an exceptional degree of holiness or likeness to God. The pope has deemed Serra the "evangelizer of the West," who converted thousands of natives to Catholicism in California. However, many Native Americans consider Serra's canonization a "mistake," as he is known among the native people for the destruction of their culture, language and belief systems.

Louise J. Miranda Ramirez, the chairwoman for the Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation, has traced her ancestors to the Carmel Mission. She was emotional when describing the impact of Serra's colonial crusade: "I feel the pain that my ancestors went through — the shackles, the whippings — and I think, 'How could you do this to them?'"

Along with Ramirez, hundreds of Native Americans have staged protests in California — including Carmel, Monterey, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara — holding signs that read:

"SERRA AIN'T NO SAINT."

"NO SAINTHOOD FOR SERRA."

"NATIVES AGAINST SERRA."

"NATIVE LIVES MATTER."

According to Ramirez, when Pope Francis makes his trip to the United States in September, he will be greeted with the voices of the Native people who oppose the canonization.

Alan Leventhal, an archaeologist and ethnohistorian at San Jose State University, has spent 35 years working with the Amah-Mutsun Tribal Band of Costanoan Indians centered around Mission San Juan Bautista, and the Ohlone-Costanoan/Esselen Nation centered around Mission San Carlos in Monterey, as they seek the reaffirmation of their culture and tribal status.

Leventhal said the native people feel as though the canonization is a mistake, that Serra, "while a man of historic figure and note, really is not deserving and that there is no miracle that he performed to be considered a saint."



Jeffrey Burns, director of the Academy of American Franciscan History, believes that Serra is a "very good and holy man." He explained that Serra could have stayed in Majorca, Spain, where he was born and where he lived a comfortable life; but he instead

made the decision to go to a new land and bring what he thought was the greatest gift he could bring – the good news of Jesus.

Burns acknowledged that there are mixed reactions among those associated with the church who are excited about the canonization of a new saint, and those who are in opposition because of what Serra represents.

“He is the symbol of what occurred,” said Thomas Sheehan, a professor of religious studies at Stanford. “He represents the problems of colonization and imperialism that lead to the desolation of Native American culture and Native American people.”

Ramirez said Native American history is being threatened through Serra’s canonization, even though their ancestors underwent this treatment 200 years ago. “They can’t erase the crimes he committed by making him a saint,” Ramirez said. “And that’s what they’re trying to do.”

What gives Ramirez and other Native Americans hope? “The greatest thing about all of this,” said Ramirez, “is the voices of the native people standing up and saying ‘no.’”

“NO, Serra is not a saint.”

Direct Link: <http://peninsulapress.com/2015/06/18/california-native-americans-oppose-junipero-serra-canonization/>

'Super Indian' Takes On The Romantic Stereotypes Of Native Americans

The Huffington Post | By [Katherine Brooks](#)

Posted: 06/19/2015 10:00 am EDT Updated: 06/19/2015 1:59 pm EDT



© Estate of Fritz Scholder

In 1969, a Minnesota-born artist by the name of Fritz Scholder painted a portrait he dubbed "[Indian with Beer Can](#)." The image shows a stark figure in sunglasses and a cowboy hat, sitting with his arms crossed and teeth bared before a can of Coors. Unlike many studio paintings that came before it -- the ones that pictured Native Americans as indomitable or mystic figures detached from Whiter society -- Scholder's portrait was

mundane, lower class, uncomfortable. It didn't shy away from the taboo of alcoholism in indigenous communities, nor did it cover up America's distaste for acknowledging poverty and alienation in the Indian Nation.

"Indians in America are usually poor," Scholder remarked to a newspaper a few years later, "sometimes derelicts outside the value system, living in uncomfortable surroundings. We have really been viewed as something other than human beings by the larger society. The Indian of reality is a paradox -- a monster to himself and a non-person to society."



Fritz Scholder, "American Portrait with Flag," 1979. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 40 × 35 in. Courtesy of American Museum of Western Art—The Anschutz Collection / Photo courtesy William J. O'Connor © Estate of Fritz Scholder.

Back in the late '60s and '70s, Scholder's pop art drew attention good and bad, and it continues to do so today. "[It's still haunting](#)"; it's still devastating seeing these white teeth, a distorted face to suggest a skull," Comanche author Paul Chaat Smith explained to NPR in 2008. "You can't see the figure's eyes, they're behind sunglasses -- incredibly arresting and powerful work even today, but back then it was extraordinary."

Part of the sensation surrounding Scholder's works boiled down to the fact that the artist wrestled with his own Native American heritage. Despite the fact that his paternal grandmother was a member of the Luiseño tribe of Mission Indians, Scholder publicly claimed that he wasn't American Indian and that he would never paint American Indians. Some critics not-so-silently saw this [as fraud](#).

Yet Scholder became most known for his "Indian" series, a collection of portraits that rendered his subjects as conflicted rather than stoic, familiar rather than mythic. Not long after he began teaching at the Institute of American Indian Arts, his works openly explored the contemporary identity of American Indians, forcing stereotypes off the canvas and forging, rather reluctantly, what would arguably become the basis for contemporary Native American art.



Fritz Scholder, "Indian at the Lake," 1977. Lithograph; overall: 22 × 32-1/4 in. Denver Art Museum: Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Harold Dinken, 1979.159 © Estate of Fritz Scholder.

Collector and Denver Art Museum patron Kent Logan elaborates: "Despite his repeated denials that he was not an Indian and would never paint Indians, the emotional intensity of these 1970s portraits dismisses any notion that Fritz Scholder was not personally invested in a protracted, tragic, and still unresolved Native American experience."

Scholder's works are set to go on view this fall at the Denver Art Museum in an exhibition titled "[Super Indian](#)," drawn from the painting "Super Indian No. 2." Covering the portraits he made between 1967 and 1980, the pieces reflect a time period colored by the rise of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the aftermath of the broader civil rights movement. While pop art was sweeping the states -- and evidence of this can be seen in Scholder's figuration, reminiscent of Philip Guston and Wayne Thiebaud -- sociopolitical art was taking hold too.

"Scholder was not a protest painter," John P. Lukavic writes in the exhibition's catalog. "He did not 'dig Red Power.'" But his desire to break up stereotypes and urge Americans to confront an un-romanticized portrait of American Indians was nothing if deliberate.



Fritz Scholder, "Super Indian No. 2," 1971. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 90 × 60 in. Promised gift from Vicki and Kent Logan to the Collection of the Denver Art Museum © Estate of Fritz Scholder.

Besides "Indian with Beer Can," Scholder painted Sioux chiefs and Hopi dancers, but for every traditional scene there's a portrait loaded with hidden meaning. Titles like "Mad Indian," "Monster Indian" and "Insane Indian" hint as much. His bright color palettes morph into abstracted bodies equipped with clenched jaws and clenched fists, revealing subject matter both harrowing ("Indian Dying in Nebraska") and tongue-in-cheek ("Hollywood Indian"). Operating under a simple M.O. -- "[Real not Red](#)" -- he built a complex representation of the 20th-century American Indian before he died in 2005, one never free of controversy.

"Here is what Scholder's work forces me, and other Indian people of a certain generation to remember," Paul Chaat Smith [writes on his blog](#). "That we used to have short hair and wear IHS glasses. That we passed for white. That our grandparents were raised by the army. That we drink. That we weren't always about tradition, that most people we knew didn't care about it either, until not so long ago when suddenly everyone did and then pretended that we always had cared about it. That we often we hated ourselves, and sometimes we still do. That life is ugly and beautiful, that monsters are real. And that death is never far away."

In response, Scholder would probably have fallen back on his typically cryptic but nonetheless powerful prerogative: "I felt it to be a compliment when I was told that I had

destroyed the traditional style of Indian art, for I was doing what I thought had to be done.”



Fritz Scholder, "American Portrait with One Eye," 1975. Acrylic paint on canvas; overall: 80 × 68 in. Collection of Vicki and Kent Logan. © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder, "Monster Indian," 1968. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 18 × 20 in. Collection of Anne and Loren Kieve/ Photographer: Randy Dodson. © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



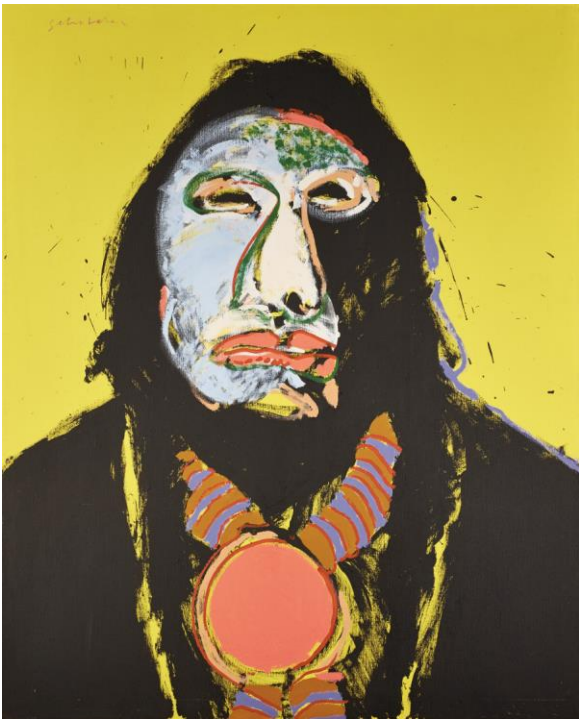
Fritz Scholder, "Matinee Cowboy and Indian," 1978. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 80 × 68 in. Promised gift from Vicki and Kent Logan to the Collection of the Denver Art Museum. © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder, "Mad Indian," 1968. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 71 × 60 in. Promised gift from Vicki and Kent Logan to the Collection of the Denver Art Museum. © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder. "Indian in Taos Pueblo," 1970. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 65 × 70 in. Promised gift from Vicki and Kent Logan to the Collection of the Denver Art Museum © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder, "Insane Indian No. 26," 1972. Acrylic paint on canvas; overall: 68 × 54 in. Promised gift from Vicki and Kent Logan to the Collection of the Denver Art Museum © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder, "Indian No. 1," 1967. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 20 × 18 in. Collection of Anne and Loren Kieve © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder, "Hollywood Indian," 1973. Acrylic paint on canvas; overall: 68 × 54 in. Private collection. Photographer: Jacquelyn Phillips © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder, "Seated Indian with Rifle (After Remington)," 1976. Acrylic paint on canvas; overall: 40 × 30 in. Denver Art Museum: Gift of Polly and Mark Addison, 2009.361 © Estate of Fritz Scholder.



Fritz Scholder, "Indian and Rhinoceros," 1968. Oil paint on canvas; overall: 68 × 120 in. Collection of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 268066.000. Photographer: Walter Larrimore, NMAI. © Estate of Fritz Scholder.

"Super Indian" is part of the Denver Museum of Art's ["overall initiative"](#) to expand the visibility of contemporary art by American Indian artists." The exhibition, featuring 40 rarely seen paintings and lithographs, will be on view from Oct. 4 to Jan. 17, 2016.

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/19/super-indian-fritz-scholder_n_7589386.html

Wisc. district bans clothes with Native American logos

Dana Ferguson, Associated Press 9:10 p.m. EDT June 19, 2015



Madison, Wis. — Sports fans may have to leave their Blackhawks, Indians or Washington football gear at home if they plan on entering a Madison public school next year.

Starting this fall, public school students in Wisconsin’s capital city cannot wear shirts, hats or other items that display the name, logo or mascot of any team that portrays a “negative stereotype” of American Indians. Those who do must change or face suspension or expulsion.

“The existence of these mascots destroys our self-esteem. The existence of these mascots shows us how people really think of us,” Gabriel Saiz, a junior at Madison West High, told the city school board in May shortly before it voted unanimously to adopt the policy.

The district’s dress code says a list of prohibited logos and mascots would be made available before the beginning of the school year.

The move comes some two years after Gov. Scott Walker signed a law that made it harder for the state’s public schools to drop tribal nicknames. The measure was prompted by officials in a handful of Wisconsin cities who refused to part with mascots such as the Chieftains and the Indians after the state Department of Public instruction ordered them to drop the monikers. Previous state law allowed the state agency to launch a hearing into

each race-based nickname with a single complaint. Current law requires a petition to trigger the hearing.

Larry Dupuis, legal director for American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin, said he was not pleased with the Madison school district's move. He said it limits students' free speech and seems counterproductive by stifling conversation about American Indian portrayals.

"This kind of Band-Aid doesn't fix these sorts of underlying problems," Dupuis said. "What a horrible thing to tell kids that we can't discuss these ideas, that we should avert our eyes to this."

Brian Howard, a spokesman for the National Congress of American Indians, welcomed the ban, which he said was the first he'd heard of in a public school. He said a private school, Sandy Spring Friends School in Maryland, approved a much more limited ban in February against only the name of the mascot of the Washington, D.C. NFL team. The school doesn't require uniforms.

"If people are asked to turn their shirts inside out, that's going to get people talking," Howard said. "They're going to ask, 'Why?' They're always going to inquire about it."

Republican State Rep. Andre Jacque said that not all American Indians reject the mascots. He pointed to Mishicot, a village in his district where local tribe spokesmen have approved of the public school district's mascot — the Indian.

"Native American mascots have served as a point of pride for Native American students and fans," Jacque said.

Thirty-one Wisconsin high schools use Indian mascots and logos, said Barbara Munson, an Oneida Indian who chairs the Wisconsin Indian Education Association's mascots and logos task force.

Direct Link: <http://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/nation/2015/06/19/wisconsin-american-indian-sport-logos/29018319/>

New farmers market to focus on needs of Native Americans

By [Steve Carmody](#) • Jun 20, 2015

The [Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan](#) broke ground this week on a unique farmers market.



Officials of the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe of Michigan break ground for a new farmers market

When it opens in July, the market near Mount Pleasant will feature locally grown produce, including some from local Native American farmers.

“We wanted to bring a quality of life to our membership and our tribal community...not unlike what’s been done in other communities,” says Frank Cloutier a tribal spokesman.

Officials hope the farmers market will help reduce obesity and diabetes rates among tribal members.

The market will also provide a venue for Native American artisans to sell to the public.

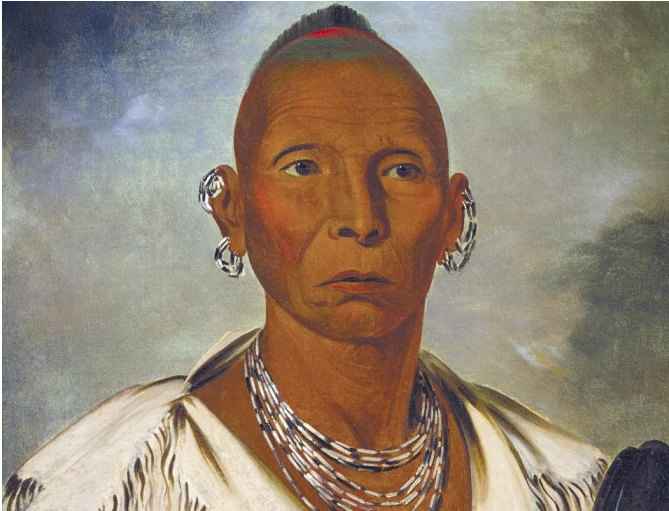
“It’s important we retain our Native American culture and this is an opportunity to do that,” says Jim Turner, the state director for the USDA office of Rural Development.

The USDA is providing grant money to pay for construction of the new farmers’ market pavilion.

Direct Link: <http://michiganradio.org/post/new-farmers-market-focus-needs-native-americans#stream/0>

How Is the Blackhawks’ Name Any Less Offensive Than the Redskins’?

Like the Washington NFL franchise, the Chicago hockey team has a Native American name, but the history it evokes is better worth remembering.



"Múk-a-tah-mish-o-káh-kaik, Black Hawk, Prominent Sac Chief," George Carlin, 1832 Smithsonian American Art Museum

[Steve Inskeep](#)

Jun 19, 2015

Hockey's Stanley Cup is now held by a team with a Native American name. The Chicago Blackhawks triumphed over the Tampa Bay Lightning this week to win the National Hockey League championship for the sixth time. On Thursday a parade honored the team whose logo shows an Indian wearing a feathered headdress.

Washington's professional football team also has a name referencing Native Americans, and a similar logo—yet the two teams have been received very differently in recent years. Some news organizations avoid saying “Redskins,” a word many Native American groups and linguists consider a slur. In 2014, the federal government revoked the Redskins' trademark protection, ruling that the name was disparaging.

The Blackhawks face less controversy, and have argued that their team name is not a generic racial stereotype. It honors a real person, Black Hawk.

The team may yet face its moment of reckoning. But it's worth hearing the incredible story behind the name, part of the vast narrative of westward settlement. That story, in turn, points to a new standard that can help citizens decide when, if ever, to favor sports names with Native American themes.

Black Hawk was a leader of the Sauk people, who were pressured to give up Midwestern land in the early 1800s. A treaty they considered unjust forced them out of modern-day Illinois and west of the Mississippi. Like many Indians who opposed land-grabbing American settlers, Black Hawk sided with the British in the War of 1812.

The Sauks got nothing for their war. In 1832 they tried again to recover land they believed to be theirs, crossing east of the Mississippi. The resulting conflict became

known as the Black Hawk War. White residents, including a young Abraham Lincoln, volunteered to fight the incursion.

Black Hawk was forced to surrender. He was sent to Washington, and brought before President Andrew Jackson. The president scolded Black Hawk, but soon ordered his release. Jackson also arranged for him to tour Eastern cities, so that he would see he could never defeat a nation so large and powerful.

Black Hawk became a celebrity on that tour, mobbed by curious crowds. “I ought not to have taken up the tomahawk,” he was quoted as saying in Baltimore. “But my people have suffered a great deal.” President Jackson was touring Baltimore at the same time. The former enemies both attended the same stage show, a popular act called *Jim Crow*, which featured a white man in blackface. (It was a rather different time.)

For some European settlers and their descendants, associating with Indians was part of what it meant to *be* American.

The early 19th century did have one thing in common with the modern era: It was popular for white people to appropriate Indian names and symbols. Long before the Cleveland Indians ever played baseball, there was Tammany Hall, a powerful New York City political organization named for a Delaware Indian leader. Its workers were “braves,” and its leaders were “sachems” or “chiefs.” Artists and writers put native characters in novels and paintings. A famous actor of the 1820s commissioned a play in which he took the title role of *Metamora*—an Indian chief who denounces white men as they kill him and take his land. For some European settlers and their descendants, associating with Indians was part of what it meant to *be* American.

Once it’s understood that modern sports teams are choosing to follow a centuries-old tradition, it’s easy to see how perilous their choice can be. White settlers began embracing certain trappings of Indian life even while displacing Indians themselves. Indians were dismissed as wandering savages, “children of the woods,” or ... redskins.

But it’s also part of the tradition that some Indians became heroes. Black Hawk’s name was given to a military unit in World War I. A veteran of that unit later re-used the name when he started his Chicago hockey team in the 1920s. Still later, it graced the type of helicopter seen in *Black Hawk Down*. There was also Osceola, who resisted the drive to remove Seminoles from Florida. In 1835 he murdered a federal agent in what today might be labeled a terror attack. But the government later captured him while he was negotiating under a white flag, an act considered so unfair that today counties in several states are named for him, as is the mascot for the Florida State Seminoles.

So which sports names, if any, are tolerable in 2015?

One common standard is simply whether people are offended. That’s the standard that trademark officials applied to the Redskins case. Of course, not everyone will find the same things offensive. Even as the American Indian Movement has organized protests

outside Redskins games, team owner Dan Snyder has called the name a “badge of honor.”

Even as the American Indian Movement has organized protests outside Redskins games, Dan Snyder called the name “a badge of honor.”

A different standard is whether a team can find a native group that approves of the name. Even the Redskins have cited some Native Americans who say they aren’t bothered by that particular word. The Blackhawks have the support of the Chicago-based American Indian Center, which has received grants from the team. But this is tricky. The center’s director, Andrew Johnson, who is Cherokee, told me the center held a town hall meeting where many Indians denounced the team name as racist. He said native culture requires “respect” for those different opinions.

There’s also a public wellness standard: The American Psychological Association declared a decade ago that Native American names and mascots created a “hostile learning environment” for native students. But clearly some teams aren’t persuaded.

So here is a new standard. Do we learn anything from the team name? Does the name teach us anything we want to pass on about this country, its history, and its people?

If people learn the story behind a team name, they can make an informed decision about whether they approve or not. Indians are part of the American fabric, and it’s not automatically bad to include them in pop culture. The Chicago Blackhawks at least have a case to make, even if it’s one that needs to be weighed against other factors.

It’s not surprising that “redskin” evolved into a word that simply diminishes the people it describes.

With other teams, it’s more complicated. The Kansas City Chiefs say they’re named after a former Kansas City mayor whose nickname was “Chief,” but they also use the native image of an arrowhead in their team logo. The Atlanta Braves’ story is awkward. The team is in Georgia, where streets, shopping malls and a county are named for Cherokees, but actual Indians were evicted almost 200 years ago.

Could the Redskins meet the standard?

They’d have to complete a sentence. “It’s important for Americans to think about the word redskin because ...” If Redskins fans can complete that sentence and feel proud of it, they’d have a better case for keeping the team’s name.

I asked a Redskins spokesman for the “redskin” story. He pointed out the work of the scholar Ives Goddard, who [argued in 2005](#) that “redskin” was used in colonial times by some Native Americans themselves. They were trying to define the racial difference between Indians and encroaching whites. But the same scholar records the expression used by Indians in an oddly negative way (“I am a red-skin,” one confessed, “but what I

say is the truth”), and by whites in a patronizing way (President James Madison referred to “my red children”). It’s not surprising that “redskin” evolved into a word that simply diminishes the people it describes.

Do the Redskins want to hang their identity on that? If so, their name will tell a story that stretches far beyond football, whether their fans want it to or not.

Direct Link: <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2015/06/blackhawks-redskins-name/396356/>

Domestic Abusers Have Gone Unpunished in Native American Country — Until Now

By [Tristan Ahtone](#)

June 21, 2015 | 7:05 am

There was nothing Michael Valenzuela could do about it. Nobody could, really. The victim was a tribal member living on the reservation and dating a non-Native man with an abusive streak as deep as it was vicious.

Back in the 1990s Valenzuela was a rookie cop on the [Pascua Yaqui](#) reservation, just outside Tucson, Arizona; today he serves as the tribe's [chief of police](#). With short curly hair and a soft, even voice, Valenzuela prefers talking about some of his personal interests — Wakavaki (a traditional Pascua Yaqui soup) or Star Wars (his office is filled with memorabilia) — than about violence on the reservation. However, his first domestic violence case has stuck with him to this day.

In the 1990s, the law was working against him: The victim was a Pascua Yaqui tribal member; the abuser, a non-Native man. The crime occurred within Pascua Yaqui territory — a small reservation covering three and a half square miles with nearly 5,000 residents living in modest homes set against the tan-and-khaki-color palette of the Sonoran desert. Non-Native-on-Native abuse meant that if anyone was going to punish the offender it would be federal authorities, not Pascua Yaqui.

"I would arrest him and we knew right away to contact the US attorney's office," Valenzuela told VICE News. "Most of the time they would just decline the case right then and there."

That meant Valenzuela would put the guy in the back of his cruiser, drive him off the reservation, and let him go in the parking lot of a convenience store.

"We felt like we were letting her down because what do we do? Drive him further? He'd just walk longer and he'd still get here, or he'd get a ride," said Valenzuela. "The only

protection we [wanted] was incarceration for repeat offenders, and it wasn't available to us."

In many cases, it still isn't.

"We just had a case two days ago where a juvenile non-Indian committed an aggravated assault on a parent and there was a seven-year-old kid present," said Valenzuela. In that situation, the parent and the seven-year-old were Pascua Yaqui, while the juvenile was a non-Native, repeat offender on the reservation with a rap sheet multiple pages long. With the arrest, Pascua Yaqui called the US attorney.

"The US attorney says, 'We're not taking this case'," said Valenzuela. "That evening [the juvenile] left the reservation, and we can't touch him now."

According to the [Department of Justice](#), the rate of violent victimization among Native American women was more than double the rate of all women between 1992 and 2002 (the most recent figures available). During that same time period, nearly 60 percent of Native victims described their attacker as white.

But two years ago the [Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013](#) (VAWA) took effect, creating a pilot project that gave three tribes the ability to [exercise jurisdiction](#) over non-Native offenders who committed domestic or dating violence, or who violated protection orders in tribal territories. Given its preliminary success, the program has been hailed as a baby step toward restoring tribal sovereignty; in March of this year, the program was opened up to all 566 tribes in the US.

For thousands of years, tribes have been able to police their territories and communities. But for the last 130 years, the ability for tribes to self-govern has been hampered and undermined by the federal government, creating a safety crisis in Indian Country; this has been most easily demonstrated through the staggering rates of violence against women. VAWA restores tribes' ability to go after one specific, heinous crime, but it also raises questions about whether a small legal fix can create real change — or provides too little justice.

The Port Madison Reservation, Washington, in the 1970s: A high-speed chase with tribal police ends after Daniel B. Belgrade crashes into a tribal police car. He is charged with "recklessly endangering another person." In an unrelated incident, Mark David Oliphant went to a tribal festival, got drunk, and hit a cop. He was charged with assaulting an officer and resisting arrest. Both men were non-Native residents of the Port Madison Reservation, and both argued that the Suquamish Indian Tribe had no criminal jurisdiction over them because they were not Indian. They took their case to the Supreme Court.

In 1978 the Supreme Court agreed in [*Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe*](#). Their reasons: Congress's actions during the 19th century made it clear that non-Indians were never intended to be under the jurisdiction of Indians and that tribes had submitted to the "overriding sovereignty of the United States" and could not try non-Natives without Congressional authorization.

The ruling effectively stripped tribes of their remaining ability to prosecute non-Natives who commit crimes in Indian Country, making the federal government the new sheriff in town, albeit a distant, mostly unavailable one.

Oliphant v. Suquamish was the final blow after 130 years of congressional acts aimed at eroding tribal authority: In the late 1800s, the federal government gave itself authority with the [Major Crimes Act](#) to prosecute Indians who commit felonies — rape, murder, larceny, for instance — on tribal lands, an ability the federal government does not possess with respect to states. In the 1950s, [Public Law 280](#) transferred authority for certain tribes to six states, with others following, thereby expanding criminal jurisdiction to cover crimes committed on tribal lands. And in the 1960s, the [Indian Civil Rights Act](#) placed stiff limitations on the length of jail sentences and fine amounts that tribes could mete out. The interaction between the Indian Civil Rights Act and the Major Crimes Act had the practical effect of removing from tribes the ability to effectively prosecute Indians who commit felonies on tribal lands. With *Oliphant*, now a white man could come onto a reservation, beat up his Native girlfriend, and, if caught, wait to see if a US or county attorney would prosecute.

Of approximately 9,000 cases resolved by the US attorney's office between 2005 and 2009, [50 percent of those cases](#) were resolved through declination. That means that over half the crimes referred to authorities by tribes for prosecution were declined for reasons ranging from the availability of evidence for investigators, to differences in agency protocols.

In [1994 the first Violence Against Women Act](#) was passed, aimed at holding abusers accountable and treating domestic violence as a serious crime. While the law helped states tackle the problem, there was still a huge gap in Indian Country: Tribes could not prosecute if the defendant was non-Native. However two years ago, despite [opposition from Republican lawmakers](#) like Senator Charles Grassley of Iowa, who [claimed](#) that non-Indians couldn't get a fair trial on an Indian Reservation, VAWA 2013 became law. Through focused efforts by tribes, advocates, and lawmakers, Native people finally reaped the benefits the rest of the United States enjoys by restoring the ability of tribes to prosecute non-Natives — a partial *Oliphant*-fix.

"They basically gave tribes the ability to start to exercise this limited jurisdiction," Pascua Yaqui Attorney General [Alfred Urbina](#) told VICE News. "But in reality, it's only a sliver of that authority and it covers only relationship violence with an intimate partner or marital partner."

Crimes like threats and intimidation, destruction of property, sexual assault by strangers, the hurting of a pet, or even child abuse still require calls to the US attorney before an offender goes to jail or gets a ride off the reservation.

"We've had about four or five cases that we had to dismiss because they involved things like trespassing, disorderly conduct, and things that did not involve an actual assault," said Urbina. "The offenders in those cases ended up reoffending and physically assaulting the victim a few months later, after we had dismissed the case for that reason."

Though the Major Crimes Act, Public Law 280, the Indian Civil Rights Act, and *Oliphant* do not allow tribal police to prosecute crimes, they are usually the lead investigators. When you're on the reservation and you call the police, tribal or Bureau of Indian Affairs cops will likely be the first on the scene. Then there's a checklist: Is anyone involved in the incident non-Native? Is the incident actually occurring on Indian land? What's the nature of the incident? If you're in a Public Law 280 state, you might need to call the county sheriff and wait till he or she arrives. If it's domestic violence, maybe you take the guy to jail. If it's a child sex abuse case, maybe you call the FBI. The list goes on.

'It is a paternalistic and anachronistic, outdated view of how it is we should deal with law enforcement in Indian Country.'

Former US Attorney for Arizona [Paul Charlton](#) would like to see law enforcement given back to communities.

"Turn sovereignty back to the sovereign nations," said Charlton. "Give them responsibility and ownership for not just the investigation, but for the prosecution of those offenses that take place. In their own reservation, on their own reservation."

The equivalent situation for the rest of America would be New York City handing over all criminal jurisdiction to Canadian authorities and expecting swift justice when a purse gets snatched in Brooklyn.

"It is a paternalistic and anachronistic, outdated view of how it is we should deal with law enforcement in Indian Country," Charlton told VICE News. "It's one that needs to change."

Between 1992 and 2002 the Department of Justice reported that [Native Americans experience rates of violence](#) at two times the rest of the US population. According to the [Indian Law and Order Commission](#), in Alaska, Native women make up 47 percent of reported rape victims but only 19 percent of the state's population, while in 2000 the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service reported](#) that over 34 percent of Native women had been raped in their lifetime while 61 percent experienced physical assault.

While Pascua Yaqui and a handful of other tribes are beginning to take steps to deal with violence against Native women under VAWA, it's a possibility that other tribes may not. In order to prosecute non-Natives, tribes must meet a few requirements like including non-Indians on juries and providing public defenders.

In a community such as Pascua Yaqui, which sits on the edge of Tucson, getting a non-Native to sit on a jury doesn't seem like a stretch, but for remote nations like the [Havasupai Tribe](#), on the edge of the Grand Canyon, that task might be harder to complete.

And while many tribes already have public defender offices, not all do. With tribes struggling just to fund basic law enforcement, finding resources to pay a full-time public defender might be difficult.

With tribal justice systems in varying functional states due to inadequate funding, or in decay from decades of being made virtually obsolete, rolling out justice for Native women will take time, and concessions.

"Violence against women is a greater threat to tribal sovereignty than the concessions that tribes are going to have to make to exercise jurisdiction," said [Sarah Deer](#), a professor of law at William Mitchell College of Law, in Minnesota, and a recipient of a 2014 MacArthur grant. "From a tribal sovereignty perspective, it's a restoration of jurisdiction over a specific kind of crime that had been taken away as of 1978 and has been damaging tribal nations ever since."

"You can trust tribes to do it right and you can trust the tribes to do it fair," said [Melissa Tatum](#), a law professor at the University of Arizona and associate director, [Indigenous Peoples Law & Policy Program](#). "The evidence of that is the first jury trial under VAWA 2013 [on Pascua Yaqui] ended in the acquittal of the non-Indian, and that was the right result."

In the two years since Pascua Yaqui has had jurisdiction to prosecute, tribal authorities have seen a total of 21 VAWA cases. But the big question is, how can tribes continue to expand jurisdiction to cover more crimes? Many say a legislative fix to Oliphant would restore tribes' ability to police their borders, but that's only if lawmakers take note and work to understand that Indian Country isn't that much different from the rest of the nation.

"The *Oliphant* decision as well as public opposition to [the VAWA Special Provisions] are at best about ignorance and at worst about racism," Deer told VICE News. "Because you're making assumptions that Indian people can't be fair, and that's racist or at least a very stereotypical view of Native people: that we lack the ability to be functional and fair."

However, without significant concessions by lawmakers to make radical fixes to rulings like *Oliphant*, or even minor steps to expanding the list of crimes tribes can prosecute, law and order in Indian Country will likely remain in a rut. Numbers and statistics will continue to accumulate and tribes will continue to wait to provide productive, functional, self-government for citizens in need of justice.

"I think the Congress and the Senate need to understand that we are very capable people," said Valenzuela, the Pascua Yaqui's police chief. "They need to just let us do our job and protect the community."

Direct Link: <https://news.vice.com/article/domestic-abusers-have-gone-unpunished-in-native-american-country-until-now>

Murders of indigenous people up sharply in Brazil: report

June 19, 2015 7:12 PM



Brazilian indigenous people from several tribes take part in a demonstration in Brasilia against the new law of demarcation of indigenous reserves, on December 4, 2013 (AFP Photo/Evaristo Sa)

Brasília (AFP) - Murders of indigenous people rose sharply in Brazil last year with 138 Indians killed, a rights group said Friday, warning they were also committing suicide in growing numbers.

The numbers of Indians murdered increased by 42 percent in 2014 compared to 2013, the Indigenous Missionary Council, tied to the Catholic Church, said in its annual report.

The report denounced the lack of medical assistance and rights for the country's indigenous population, while recording 135 Indian suicides, the highest yearly number in the past 29 years.

"We cannot establish the causes but we can see the connections: there is lots of racism and rejection by the urban population," anthropologist Lucia Rangel from the missionary organization told AFP.

Infant mortality for indigenous people, or Indians, already many times higher than the national average in Brazil, increased 13 percent compared to the previous year.

The report took a highly critical view of government policies, saying Brazil hasn't fulfilled a main demand of the minority group: demarcated indigenous territories.

There are some 890,000 Indians in Brazil, which has a total population of about 202 million. Their lands occupy 12 percent of the country's territory, largely in the Amazon interior.

Many of the indigenous groups are under pressure from agriculture and foresting groups pushing into areas where they live.

Direct Link: <http://news.yahoo.com/murders-indigenous-people-sharply-brazil-report-231216722.html>

UC San Diego reaching out to Native American youths

By Maureen Magee

New UC San Diego programs aim to promote college culture among Native Americans

UC San Diego has stepped up efforts to promote college culture among Native Americans under a new partnership with the Sycuan and Viejas tribes as the university seeks to boost enrollment in underrepresented communities.

Launched this year, UCSD Extension's Global Environmental Leadership and Sustainability Program will give middle and high school students the opportunity to attend summer college-prep courses at UC San Diego and at universities in Arizona, New Mexico, Hawaii and Washington, D.C.

Jennifer Medeiros of the Sycuan Teen Center said the initiative will strengthen the ongoing work of both tribes to demystify college for Native American youth.

We are trying to increase the exposure that Native American students have to different college experiences so that they can really see themselves in college. - Jennifer Medeiros, of the Sycuan Teen Center

"We are trying to increase the exposure that Native American students have to different college experiences so that they can really see themselves in college," Medeiros said. "College should not be a completely foreign experience for them."

Native Americans make up about 1.3% of the population in San Diego County and 1.7% in California. They accounted for 0.4%, or 109 students, of the UC San Diego undergraduate population last fall, a slight increase from 92 students in 2009.

High school students from Viejas and Sycuan have been preparing since February for weeklong courses at Biosphere 2 in Oracle, Ariz., as well as in Los Alamos, N.M.; Hilo and Kona, Hawaii; and Washington, D.C. Students will also participate in Academic Connections, a three-week residential program at UC San Diego.

Sandoval, an incoming senior at Steel Canyon High School and a resident of the Sycuan reservation, will study in Hawaii this summer.

"My parents and grandparents weren't given the opportunities that I have been given," said Rayanna, 17. "I do feel the pressure to satisfy their hopes and dreams that they have for me. I hope the experience puts me one step ahead of everyone else — Native American and non-Native American kids. I'm planning on going to a university after high school. That's a big deal for my family. I want to apply what I learn to better my reservation — whether it's in a medical facility or the casino."

Several courses in the program incorporate the increasingly relevant STEAM subjects — science, technology, arts and math — most of which are ingrained in the history and culture of Native American culture.

For example, the Viejas and Sycuan students who visit Arizona this summer will study the effects of climate change through hands-on learning and experiments in the Biosphere 2 program.

"Sustainable agriculture, taking care of the earth, astronomy — these are all tied to the Native American culture," Medeiros said. "This is also kind of about debunking the myth of the savage."

The program is a collaboration with Sycuan Education Department and the Viejas Tribal Education Center.

Going forward, all high school students from the tribes will have the opportunity to attend one of the summer programs depending on their grade level. UC San Diego Extension will also offer preparation classes for the SAT and ACT college entrance exams.

A separate summer program affiliated with UCSD — Young Native Scholars — has similar goals. But in addition to an academic focus, students are immersed in their cultural heritage along with partaking in activities like surfing, kayaking and studying the stars.

Marc Chavez, a UCSD alumnus who founded the Young Scholars program, noted that "the campus sits on ancestral lands, on an old Kumeyaay village; the location is very important to us because it is a kind of coming back to the coast."

The new program that involves the Sycuan and Viejas tribes is part of UC San Diego's larger goal of reaching out to communities throughout the region in an effort for the campus to better reflect San Diego, according to Ed Abeyta, assistant dean for community engagement and director of pre-collegiate and career preparations for UC San Diego Extension.

Latinos and African Americans are underrepresented in the student population compared with the county population, and whites are also a smaller percentage of UCSD students than in the county. Asians are a much higher percentage at UCSD compared with the county.

"UCSD Extension has a mission to connect the campus to the community," Abeyta said. "We want to engage every underserved community in the region to strengthen UC San Diego and the community."

Brenda Montero, education manager at the Viejas Tribal Education Center, said forging a college culture among Native American students is complicated. Native American youth have often been influenced by their relatives who had negative experiences in the American Indian boarding schools they were forced to attend, she said.

"There is still some negativity about education," Montero said. "Some of our grandparents have been in the boarding schools and had horrible experiences."

Beginning in 1860, Native American children were forced to attend boarding and day schools off their reservations in an effort to assimilate them to Western ways. The schools were known for harsh discipline, the spread of disease and strict rules that promoted Western culture over Native American traditions. The Indian Child Welfare Act, passed in 1978, allowed Native American parents to reject the schools.

The Viejas Tribal Education Center serves 130 students from kindergarten to 12th grade, and the Sycuan Tribal Education Center Serves 75 students in those same grades.

Direct Link: <http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-sd-native-americans-20150622-story.html>

A New Movie Tells the Gripping, Resonant Story of a Native American Homeless Community

By [Kevin O'Keeffe](#) June 23, 2015

Mekko tells a story quite unlike anything you'll see in Hollywood. It features people usually made into caricatures by an industry that doesn't understand them. The new movie, from director Sterlin Harjo, tells the story of one community made up of homeless Native Americans in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

If that doesn't sound unusual, it should. *Mekko* is telling the kind of story that goes unrepresented in Hollywood today — and it's for that reason that *Mekko* must be noticed.

Harjo decided to tell the fictional story of Mekko, the fictional story of a man on parole after 19 years, because it was a chance to talk about a community that's often forgotten. "I like telling stories about people that most of society forgets," Harjo told *Mic* via email. "I'm from a community and a people that most of society forgets."

Stories featuring Native characters are incredibly rare. Even those that do feature such characters aren't told by Native voices. [Dances With Wolves](#), perhaps the most famous example of this, was directed by Kevin Costner. *Mekko* is a rare instance of someone in that community being able to tell their own tale.

"I like telling stories about people without a voice. I like showing true characters in communities like the one depicted in the film," Harjo said. "I also wanted to make a film that felt immediate, something where I could take a camera and actors out into the streets and create a world."

When asked if he thought the story in *Mekko* was important, Harjo's answer was unsure, but diplomatic. "I don't know if it's important," he said. "It's important to me."

The memory of Native actors [walking off](#) the set of Adam Sandler's new movie is not a distant one. As *Indian Country Daily* reported at the time, Sandler's *The Ridiculous Six* [featured](#) "Native women's names such as Beaver's Breath and No Bra, an actress portraying an Apache woman squatting and urinating while smoking a peace pipe, and feathers inappropriately positioned on a teepee."

Such treatment of Native culture is par for the course in Hollywood, unfortunately. Think of Johnny Depp, a white actor, playing the Native American Tonto in [The Lone Ranger](#). As Harjo told *Mic*, "Having Native characters in tentpole films does nothing financially for them. Unless a Native character fits their narrative of what a Native American is — buckskin and feathers — then they aren't interested."

This is why a movie like *Mekko* is vital. Native stories should be told, and told through their own voices and performances. That way, the stories can be not only true but resonate on a higher plane. Only someone who has lived the experiences can capture the nuances and create a true slice of life. Native American communities — like the one in *Mekko* — deserve that treatment.

Hollywood, sadly, won't pay attention. It's as Harjo says: The industry follows the money. Yet every independent film featuring Native talent both in front of and behind the

camera matters. Each gets us closer to a day where Native stories can be told widely, accurately and appropriately. The more independent films like *Mekko*, the more likely it is Hollywood will notice. It won't come easy, but studios should, and must, learn.

Mekko debuted at the Los Angeles Film Festival on June 12 and awaits distribution.

Direct Link: <http://mic.com/articles/121147/a-new-movie-tells-the-gripping-resonant-story-of-a-native-american-homeless-community>

NFL's Redskins urge judge to restore trademarks in slur fight

ALEXANDRIA, Va. | By Lacey Johnson



Oct 12, 2014; Glendale, AZ, USA; Native American Indians protest the Washington Redskins name prior to the game against the Arizona Cardinals at University of Phoenix Stadium. Mandatory Credit: Mark J. Rebilas-USA TODAY Sports

Lawyers for the NFL's Washington Redskins urged a U.S. federal judge on Tuesday to reinstate six trademark registrations that were canceled last year for being offensive to Native Americans.

A U.S. Patent and Trademark Office tribunal, in making its ruling, had said it found that at least 30 percent of Native Americans found the name "Redskins" disparaging from 1967 to 1990, when the trademarks were registered.

The Redskins appealed the ruling to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, filing suit last August against the five Native Americans who successfully convinced the administrative tribunal at the patent office to void the trademarks.

Judge Gerald Lee made no immediate ruling in the case.

The implications of losing the registered trademarks would be "severe and manifold" for the team, and the move also violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the National Football League team's trademark attorney, Bob Raskopf, said in court on Tuesday.

"It's one of the most valuable marks in sports," he said.

A canceled trademark would deprive the team of the ability to use the federal trademark symbol or to defend its right to sell merchandise bearing the mark. The trademark protection will remain in place until the appeals process is completed.

An attorney representing the five Native Americans said their goal was to stop the usage of the term "Redskins."

"All we can do is cancel the registration – a registration that never should have been granted in the first place," attorney Jeffrey Lopez told the judge.

U.S. trademark law forbids the registration of marks that are disparaging.

Attorneys for the Redskins argued that the word was not offensive to a substantial number of Native Americans between 1967 and 1990, pointing to a Native American band that performed during a Redskins halftime show in 1977. Children from 80 tribes competed to perform in the band, and the National Tribal Chairmen's Association endorsed the show, said Raskopf.

"Native Americans have been on record for over 40 years about this," countered Lopez. "The term is a slur term."

Citing tradition and history, team owner Daniel Snyder for 14 years has defied calls to change the club's name, which dates from the 1930s.

A patent office tribunal also canceled the Redskins' trademarks in 1999 in a similar case. A court overturned that decision on appeal, saying the petitioners had waited too long to assert their rights after the first Redskins' trademark was issued in 1967.

Direct Link: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/23/us-nfl-redskins-trademark-idUSKBN0P327A20150623>

"The Sioux Chef" dishes on the past — and future — of Native American cuisine

By [Madeleine Thomas](#) on 24 Jun 2015 6:09 am

Indigenous Native American cuisine is hard to come by in mainstream dining. Sure, bison burgers and fry bread tacos pop up on menus and roadside stands here and there, but those dishes barely begin to tell the story of traditional Native American cooking.

Chef Sean Sherman wants to bring Native American cuisine back to its roots. Sherman, 41, is a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe and grew up on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. He's spent much of his culinary career piecing together how his ancestors ate before they were colonized. After college, Sherman moved to Minneapolis and started working in the restaurant industry. Now his catering company, [The Sioux Chef](#), and [forthcoming food truck](#), mimics meals indigenous to the Dakota and Ojibwe tribes native to the Minnesota area. Think cedar-stewed rabbit with fiddlehead ferns, roasted duck with blueberry and rosehip sauce, and corn and honey sorbet.

Cooking healthier dishes is important to Sherman. Almost 1-in-3 American Indians and Alaskan Natives are obese and diabetes rates among native people are nearly two times higher than the general U.S population. Part of the problem is that many Indian reservations are located in [food deserts](#). Sherman's cuisine emphasizes fresh, native ingredients — like maple, wild onion, and chokecherry — and avoids processed sugar, dairy, and white flour. (Even fry bread, the flattened, deep-fried dough seen as a staple Native American food, has a complicated history. During The Long Walk, a period of forced Navajo relocations from Arizona to New Mexico in the mid-1800s, government-issued flour, sugar, and lard rations made fry bread a safeguard against starvation along the 300-mile walk.)

I spoke with Sherman about his research process, his culinary secrets, and “oppression food.” Below is an edited and condensed version of our conversation.

On his deep dive into food history.

I started buying every cookbook I could find on Native American food and nothing was offering what I was looking for. I was looking for that knowledge of the usage of wild foods and the usage of preserving things, what people were picking, and what people were growing. It's not like there was a *Joy of Native American Cooking* cookbook out there for me to use as a guideline.

I really delved into wild plant identification and usage, ethnobotany [the science of the relationships between people and plants], the regional cultural differences of the different tribes, [and] the history of migration of tribes. I'm looking at what it was like to eat in the mid-1800s, basically.

On simplicity.

I've been using cedar as a seasoning, or balsam fir. It's kind of like the un-modernist cuisine because I'll [slow-stew] some deer with some cedar and salt, and that's it. Just let it slow-stew, not even braise it, and just let it go for a long time until it falls apart and all those flavors come out. You don't need to change it that much, because all these pieces

are so healthy and vibrant as they are. I've been using seed and nut oils a lot, but mostly sunflower oil. And of course making my own lard when I'm cooking down some bison or saving fat from a duck or goose.

On “oppression food.”

Almost all Native American communities were basically forcibly removed from their traditional food systems, which threw a wrench into everything. You saw fry bread become integrated into native communities across the board, but only because it was “oppression food,” really. It was something that kept them alive, but it wasn't really healthy for anybody. Because it had passed through so many generations, people were talking more about their grandmother's fry bread recipe than they were about the cool sauce they were making from wild greens or roots.

On why Native American food should be the next big thing.

I think native communities are really still recovering from what happened to them. Across the board, all Native American people have had a pretty dark history with the United States. There's a lot of great positivity we can offer and I think our food system is a huge one that should be all over the place. There should be Native American restaurants all over the nation that really show how diverse the United States is in culture and cuisine — not just beer and burgers at every stop you go to. There's so many different food systems, and so many different cultures and religions within Native America, so that should really be the focus. Someday, I hope we see more Native American restaurants across the board.

Direct Link: <http://grist.org/people/sioux-chef-dishes-on-the-past-and-future-of-native-american-cuisine/>

Native Americans seek trade board ban of Redskins name

[Ron Clements](#) Perform Media

June 23, 2015 6:06pm EDT

Citing a Supreme Court ruling that allowed Texas to ban license plates bearing the Confederate flag, [lawyers for a group of Native Americans](#) are asking for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to ban the Redskins name from the NFL.

The Washington football team appealed a ruling from the trade board last summer that [determined the team's trademarks should be canceled](#) because the nickname is disparaging to Native Americans. The judge presiding over that appeal said a ruling

would be issued "in due course." A clarification to the timeline was not given, but the case is far from over with another appeal likely on the horizon.



Redskins helmets (Getty Images)

Five Native American activists said the name “Redskins” violates the Lanham Act, which bars federal trademark registrations whose names “may disparage” or bring people into “contempt or disrepute.” The team, established in 1932, has argued that the name is protected by the First Amendment.

Jeffrey Lopez, one of the lawyers representing the Native American group, believes the trademark office's decision last year should stand.

“This case is not about preventing the use of the name Redskins ... all we can do is cancel the registration,” [Lopez said, via the Washington Post](#). “The government issues the registration, and the government has its name all over it ... but the trademark should never have been issued. The team has improperly benefited from the use of it.”

Direct Link: <http://www.sportingnews.com/nfl/story/2015-06-23/redskins-nfl-trade-board-ban-native-americans-patent-name-controversy-confederate-flag-washington>

Indigenous Group Plants Its Flag in Copa América

By DAVID WALDSTEIN JUNE 24, 2015



Mapuche protesters in Chile have attempted to bring their cause to an international audience by demonstrating during the Copa América. Credit Rodrigo Buendia/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

TEMUCO, Chile — On a cold, rainy afternoon just a few hours before Brazil played Peru in the Copa América last week, four policemen stood guard by a set of flagpoles in the town square here. Days earlier someone had managed to take down one of the red, white and blue Chilean flags and replaced it with the traditional Mapuche flag in a peaceful but poignant protest.

The Mapuche flag, a symbol of [Chile](#)'s largest indigenous group, remained aloft for only a short time before it was discovered and replaced with the official flag. Then the guards were posted to protect it.

“See them over there,” Venancio Coñuepan, a Mapuche advocate, said through an interpreter the day of the Brazil-Peru match. “They don’t want to let that happen again.”

Mr. Coñuepan, a 25-year-old law student, said he was not responsible for the flag switch. But he appeared to revel in the nonviolent protest, especially in the timing of it.

Temuco is seen as the capital of the Mapuches, an indigenous people who thrived here long before Europeans began arriving in South America five centuries ago. So the city’s hosting of several matches in this summer’s Copa América — South America’s 99-year-old international soccer championship — has been a chance for advocates to press issues facing Mapuches before an international audience.



Activists say the Mapuche, who are indigenous to Chile, have not been adequately compensated for land used to build an airport. Credit Rodrigo Buendia/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

Two weeks before Temuco hosted its first game in the Copa América, Ricardo Celis, a member of the City Council, made a formal request to the mayor that the Mapuche flag be raised alongside the Chilean flag in the town square during the tournament.

Mr. Celis, a physician who is not Mapuche, said he made the request to recognize [Mapuche influence](#) at a time when the attention of South America would be focused on Chile and Temuco. But his request was rejected by the mayor, Miguel Becker, on the grounds that the national flag already represented all Chileans and that another was unnecessary.

“I feel this is very wrong,” Mr. Celis said in a telephone interview. “If you go to Santiago or Valparaíso and ask people about Temuco, they will say it is the home of the Mapuche people. During the Copa América, it is important to recognize that the Mapuche people live here, too.”

He said that in the days after he made the request on May 19, he saw support for and against it split evenly on social media. The disagreement over the flag reflects some of the larger issues that have pitted Mapuches against some Chileans of European descent, a gap that Mr. Coñuepan seeks to bridge.

A year ago, he founded an organization called Fundación Chile Intercultural to promote the rights of Mapuches and to foster a better understanding about their cause among the general population. The focal point of some of the worst disagreements pits Chilean farmers and lumber companies against Mapuche dissidents over long-disputed land rights, and those conflicts [have drawn much publicity](#).

But there have been other more peaceful Mapuche protests surrounding the Copa América. On June 10, a few days before the flag incident, a group of about 40 Mapuche demonstrators temporarily blocked the road on which the Peruvian team bus was traveling from the Temuco airport, forcing the Peruvian players and officials to wait until the demonstration was dispersed. The activists contend that the airport was built on traditional Mapuche land, for which they have not been adequately compensated.

Many of the fans coming to Temuco for the Copa América travel through that airport. Temuco has already hosted two games in the Copa América, and on Thursday it will be the site of a quarterfinal between Bolivia and Peru.

“This is not to disrupt the Copa América, and it is not directed against the Peruvians or the Chilean people,” Coñuepan said through an interpreter. “It is to highlight the problems we face. The Chilean people think, ‘Oh, the Mapuche want a war, the Mapuche want to burn my house, the Mapuche are bad people.’ But our only problem is with the government, not with the farmer or the people.”

A passionate defender of his people's civil rights, Mr. Coñuepan is also a devoted soccer fan and supporter of Chile's national team. He noted with pride that some of its players — like the former striker Marcelo Salas and the current midfielder Jean Beausejour — are Mapuche. He also pointed out that the [logo for the 2015 Copa América](#) incorporates aspects of the design of the Mapuche flag, even if organizers and political officials refuse to fly it.

But Mr. Coñuepan also turned and pointed to a large statue near the flagpoles in the central square as fans in the red and white of Peru and the yellow of Brazil paraded by and took photographs with it. The statue was intended to commemorate the centuries-long interaction between the Mapuches and the Spanish and their descendants, but some, like Mr. Coñuepan, find it offensive.



The Peruvian team bus passing Mapuche demonstrators outside the Temuco airport on June 10. Credit Rodrigo Buendia/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

It depicts a conquistador holding a cross, a noble indigenous woman, a heroic farmer, a calm Chilean soldier with his gun at his side and an almost grotesquely distorted Mapuche warrior brandishing a spear.

“This is racism,” Mr. Coñuepan said.

At times the conflict of cultures has escalated into open hostility, with reports of arson at the farmhouses of Chilean farmers and of police brutality against Mapuches, who are somewhere between 8 and 11 percent of the Chilean population but perhaps almost a third of those in the Araucanía region around Temuco. The widely accepted term Mapuche actually refers to several groups of indigenous peoples in Chile and Argentina.

Some seek rights to confiscated land. Some seek greater political participation, or the expansion of cultural identity, including the Mapuche language, Mapudungun, and in some cases [autonomous regions](#) similar to those of indigenous peoples in the United States.

In Chile, some estimate the Mapuches retain only five percent of their traditional land, and they are not recognized in a constitution that has been difficult to amend.

Under the 17-year dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet that began in 1973, the government terminated collective property, which had a devastating effect on the Mapuches. Since then, spotty efforts have been made to address the land issue.

“There are good intentions on behalf of the government,” said Jorge Contesse, a Chilean professor of international law at Rutgers University. “But I would say the results have been inconsistent, at best.”

The Pinochet regime also enacted an antiterrorism law that was later used by the government of the former President Ricardo Lagos, a Socialist, against Mapuche leaders. That resulted in a conviction of the Chilean government by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 2014.

“The court’s conviction is a stain for Chile’s democracy,” said Contesse, who served as an expert witness for the court.

Although traditionally of the land, many Mapuche people have moved to urban centers in Santiago and Temuco over the years seeking economic opportunities. José Aylwin, the co-director of the citizen’s watch group Observatorio Ciudadano, said the platform of the Copa América could not be ignored.

“It is quite relevant,” he said. “These games are being played in the heart of Mapuche land.”

Direct Link: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/25/sports/soccer/indigenous-group-plants-its-flag-in-copa-america.html?_r=0

Remove 2% cap on funding for on reserve programs: committee

'Embarrassing that we have a population in Canada living in third-world conditions,' says Carolyn Bennett

By Kristy Kirkup, The Canadian Press Posted: Jun 24, 2015 3:47 PM ET Last Updated: Jun 24, 2015 6:28 PM ET



Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples recommends a call to create a new ministerial loan guarantee program to help pay for infrastructure on reserves. (John Woods/CP)

The Aboriginal Affairs department should remove the two per cent cap on annual funding increases for reserve programs and services, a Senate committee recommended Tuesday.

In its findings, the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples said reserve funding needs to account for inflation in First Nations communities and the growing aboriginal population.

Aboriginal people remain the fastest-growing population in Canada.

The committee's recommendations also include a call to create a new ministerial loan guarantee program to help pay for infrastructure on reserves. The report acknowledges that federal funding alone won't allow First Nations to meet infrastructure needs, but said the government could make more progress if it can help communities leverage financing.

The Senate committee began its work in November 2013, which involved visiting communities to study challenges first-hand. It heard from more than 80 witnesses including individual First Nations members, aboriginal organizations and federal agencies.

"People took us into their homes; this was not always easy," Conservative Sen. Dennis Patterson told a news conference.

"We saw homes with mould ... we saw condemned homes that people had moved back into because there was no other place to live. But we were impressed by the resourcefulness of the communities and the community members."

'Canadians expect fairness and equal opportunity, and this is now increasingly embarrassing that we have a population in Canada living in third-world conditions.' - *Carolyn Bennett, Liberal aboriginal affairs critic*

Liberal aboriginal affairs critic Carolyn Bennett said she wants the federal government to act on the recommendations.

"This is an all-party committee dominated by Conservatives, they had to admit that this is truth," Bennett said.

"Canadians expect fairness and equal opportunity, and this is now increasingly embarrassing that we have a population in Canada living in third-world conditions."

The report demonstrates the upper chamber is still doing important work, Patterson said, even as it endures scrutiny and criticism over the controversial travel and housing expenses of some members and allegations of personal misconduct by others.

Conservative Sen. Scott Tannas, who was also part of the committee, agreed.

"This is the important work that we do, this is what gets a senator out of bed these days," Tannas said. "It is valuable, it is important and we put our heart and soul into it, and our brains."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/remove-2-cap-on-funding-for-on-reserve-programs-committee-1.3125710>